



Mighty, Tidy Forms

Using Behavioral and Technological Tools to Simplify Processes for Customers and Staff



Moderator and Presenters

Moderator

Trish Skophammer (she, her, hers)

Director, Child Support Services

Office of Ramsey County Attorney

Presenter

Jodi Abel (she, her, hers)

Planning Specialist – Policy Development and Quality Assurance

Office of Ramsey County Attorney, Child Support Services Division

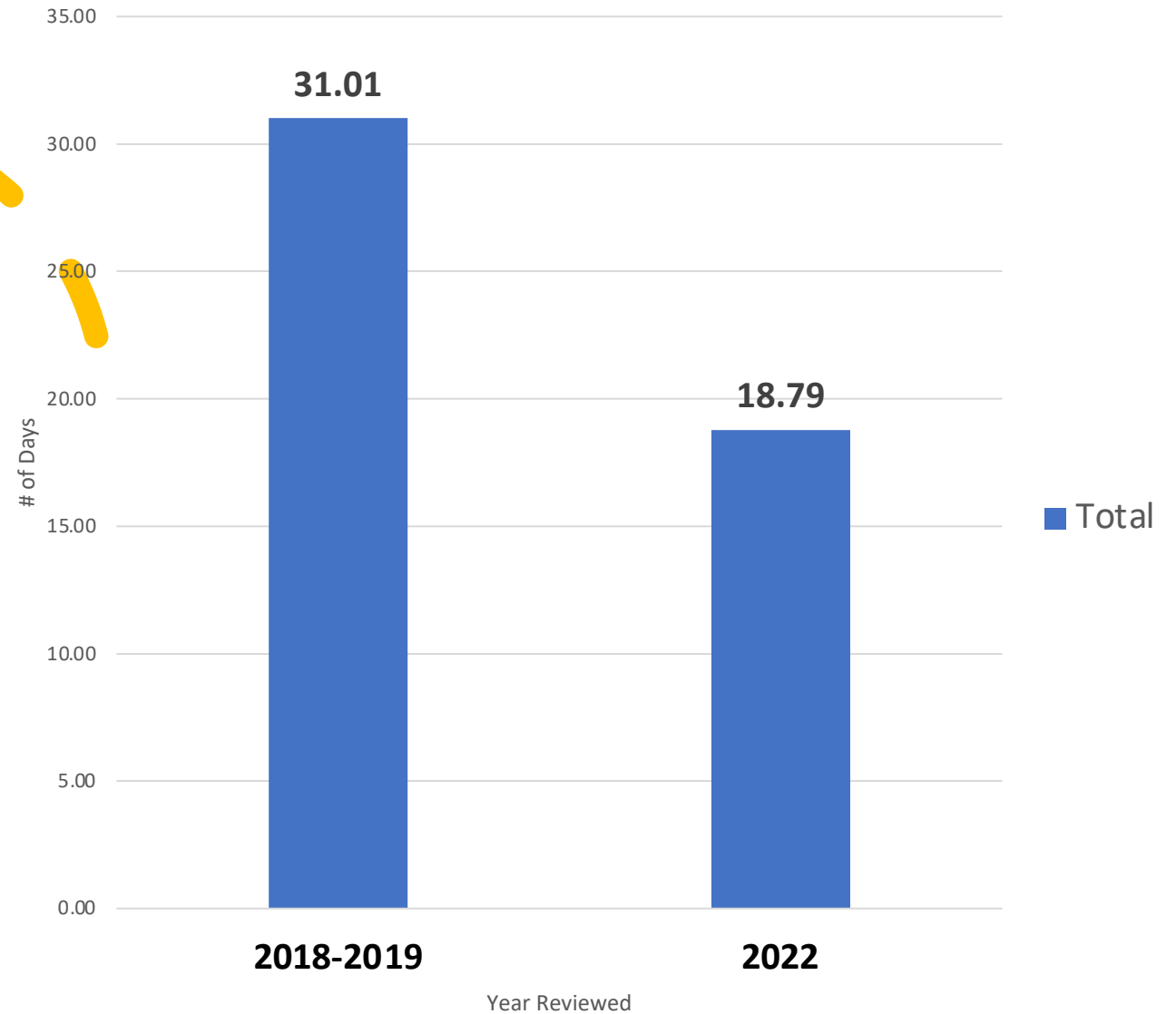
Presenter

David Ramm (he, him, his)

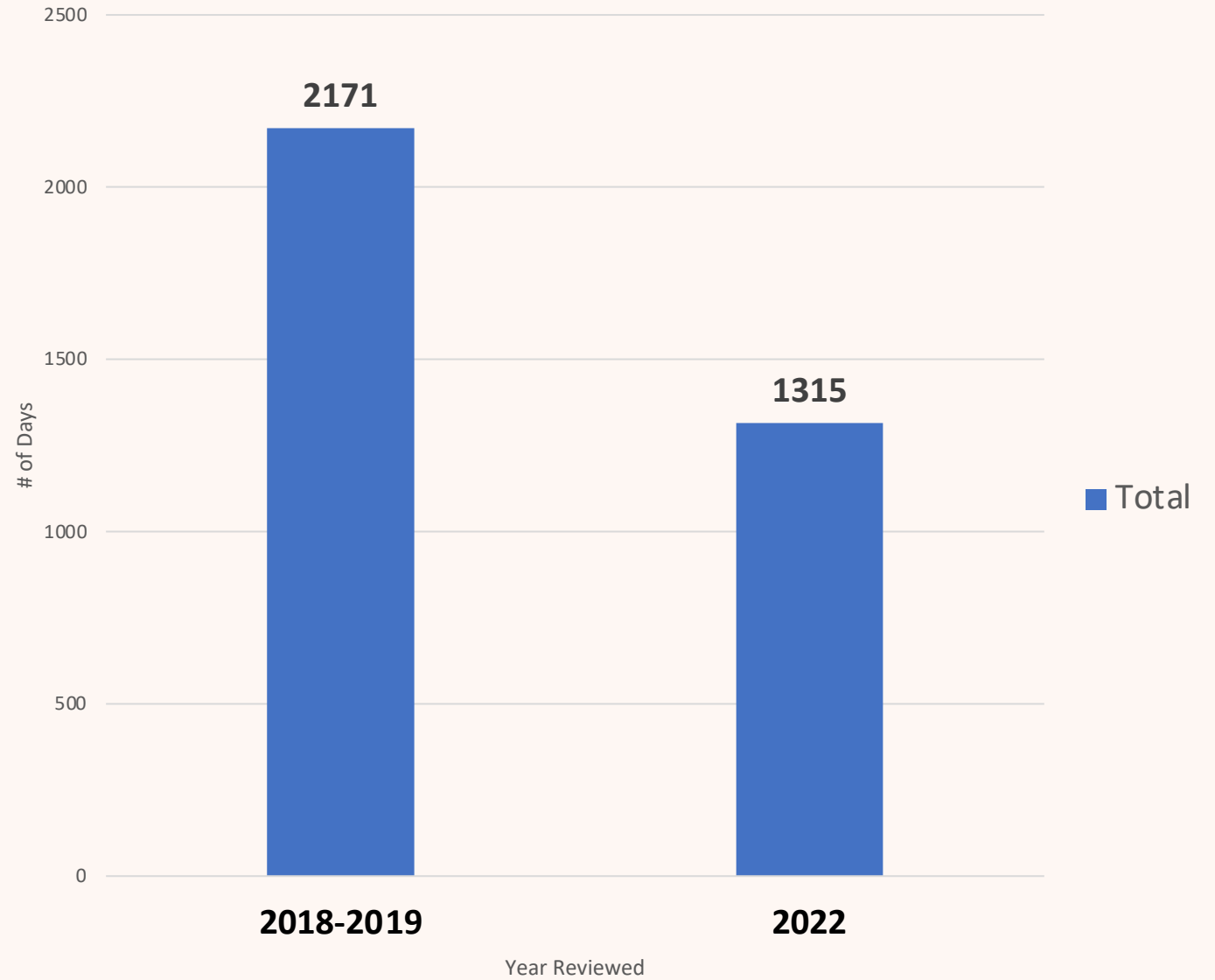
Senior Consultant

Grays Peak Strategies (GPS) and GPS Form Factory

Ramsey County reduced the average # of days to receive completed forms from clients by redesigning forms using behavioral economics principles and changing processes



Total days
to receive
completed
forms for
70 cases
without
court orders





Agenda

- Who We Are and How We Got Here
- Forms and Behavioral Economics (for Newbies and Pros Alike)
- Our Approach
- The Form Development Process
- Before and After
- Implementation and Outcomes
- Questions, Answers, and New Ideas

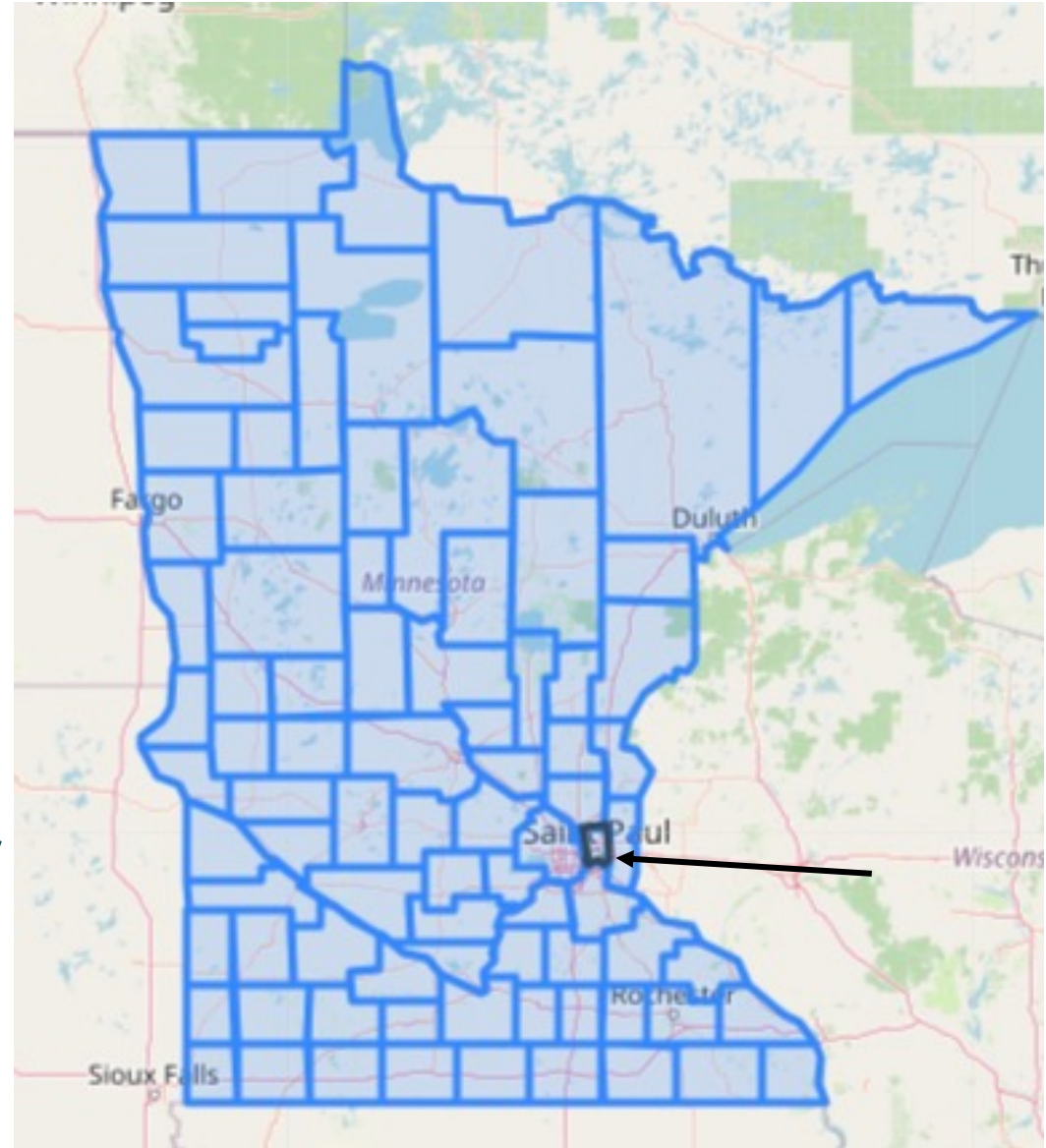


Ramsey County, Minnesota

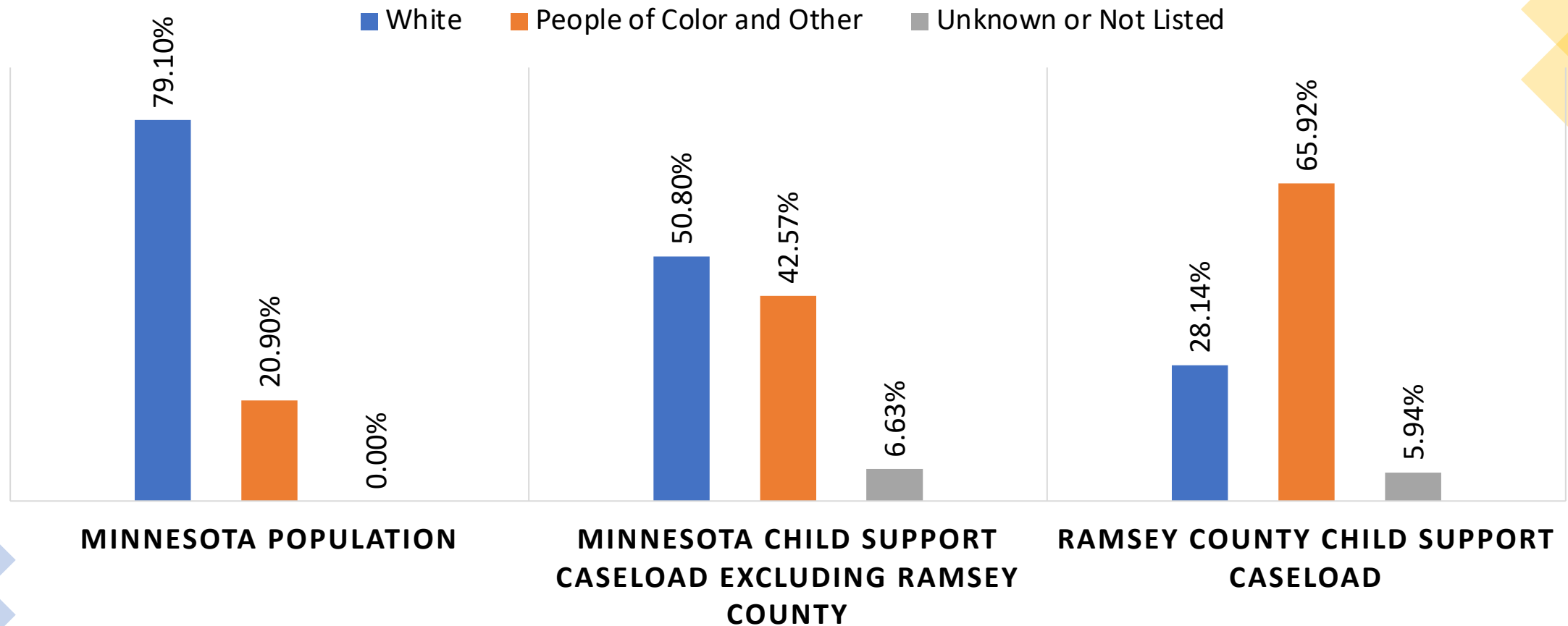
- Smallest county in land size
- Most densely populated county in Minnesota (and in U.S.) with 10% of the state's residents.
- Most racially diverse county in Minnesota, expected to increase
- Lowest household income in the seven-county metro area
- Greatest income disparities, especially within communities of color
- 2nd largest, and most racially diverse, child support caseload in Minnesota

<https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/about-ramsey-county>

https://www.ramseycounty.us/sites/default/files/Departments/Public%20Health/CHA/County%20Overview3_final.pdf



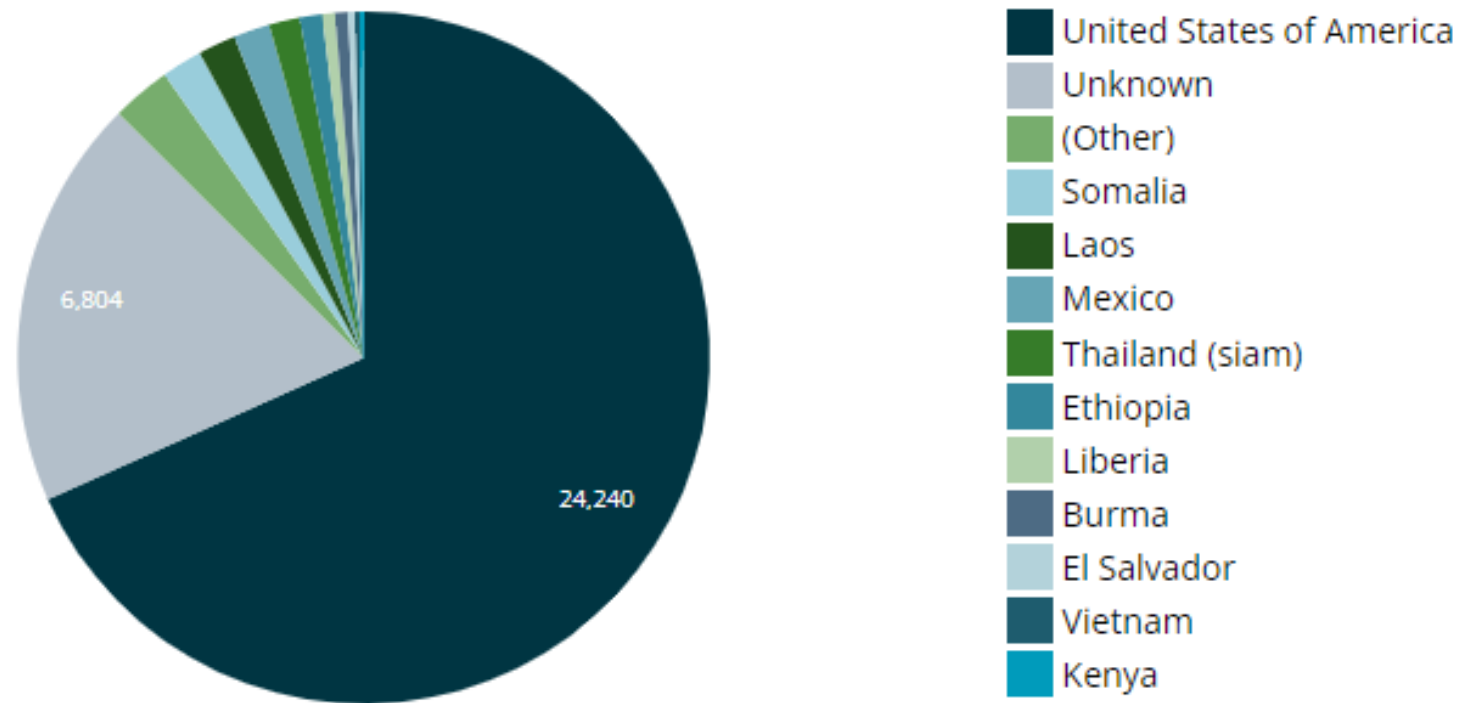
Racial Diversity – Minnesota and Child Support Caseload





Parent/caregiver's birth country

The data show the most common birth countries of our parents/caregivers. Less common countries are merged together into the "other" category.

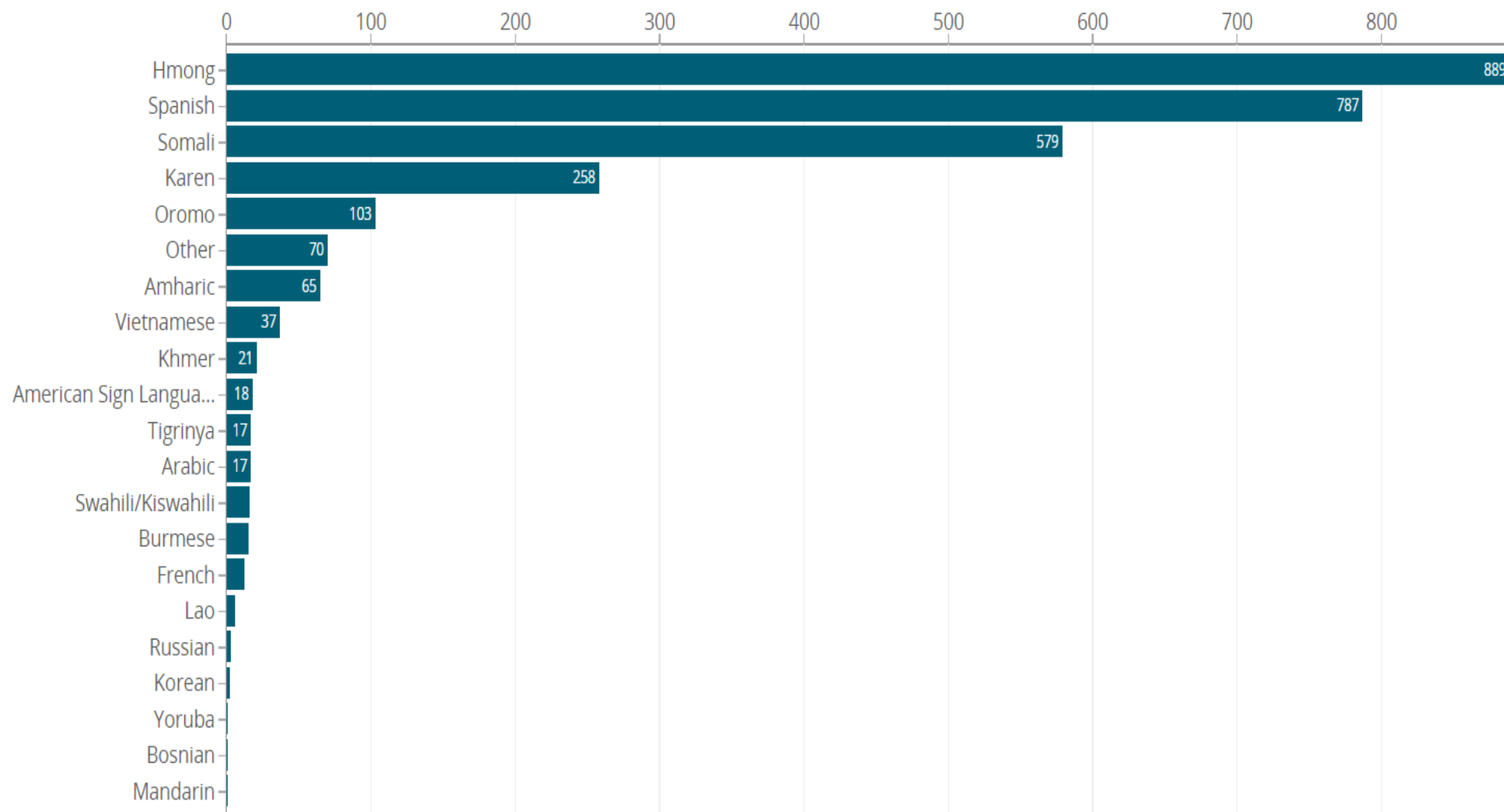




Primary language of parents/caregivers

This chart shows the number of parents/caregivers and their primary language.

Edit



* English and unknown were removed from the chart to make it possible to see the details of the other languages.

<https://data.ramseycounty.us/stories/s/Who-Receives-Child-Support-Services-/3dvj-h76w>



How did we get here talking about forms?

- State Supervised and County Administered program
- Legacy computer system 25+ years old
- State provides letters and forms for many processes
- Most letters and forms have had few or no updates over the years

- Workers started writing their own letters to clients > Inconsistent messaging to clients
- Workers and attorneys complained that clients don't fill out forms completely so they can't work the case
- Clients complain that they receive thick packets of paper to complete
 - "I don't even know where to begin"
 - "I don't have time for this"
 - "You're asking the same questions over and over"

- Created our own letters and form templates
- Continued to receive incomplete forms and low response rate from clients
- Learned about Behavioral Economics and Procedural Justice Principles at conferences.
- Believed our forms and letters could be better!
- Didn't want to reinvent the wheel, so we sought out a consultant.

Consultant Requirements

We needed a consultant to provide technical expertise in the redesign of our letters and forms.

Requirements:

- ✓ **Contractor must have successfully completed similar work for government entities and provide references for those organizations.**
- ✓ **Contractor must have obtained formal education in one or more of the following areas: creative writing, behavioral economics, graphic design, technical writing.**
- ✓ **Contractors that have performed this work specifically in child support programs will score higher.**

Request for Quote (RFQ) process

- 1. Publish RFQ in legal notices paper and also in online procurement portal**
 - We informed Grays Peak Strategies Form Factory**
- 2. Potential vendors submit bids/quotes through website**
 - Must include tax information, proof of business insurance and other required business info**
- 3. Professional services contracts awarded based on scoring of the vendors' areas of expertise, experience and likely ability to deliver the services requested**
- 4. Established contract with Grays Peak Strategies Form Factory!**
 - Issued as a "not-to-exceed certain dollar amount" contract**
 - Allowed flexibility for the number and types of documents to be redesigned**



Forms Are Fundamental

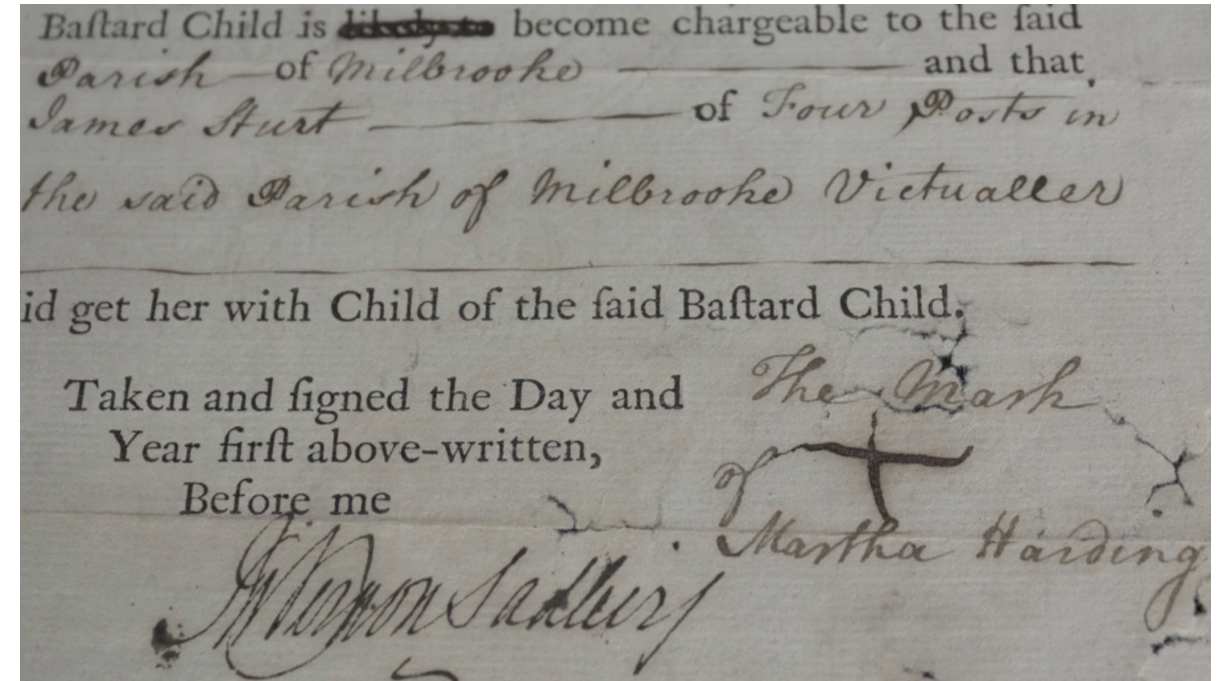
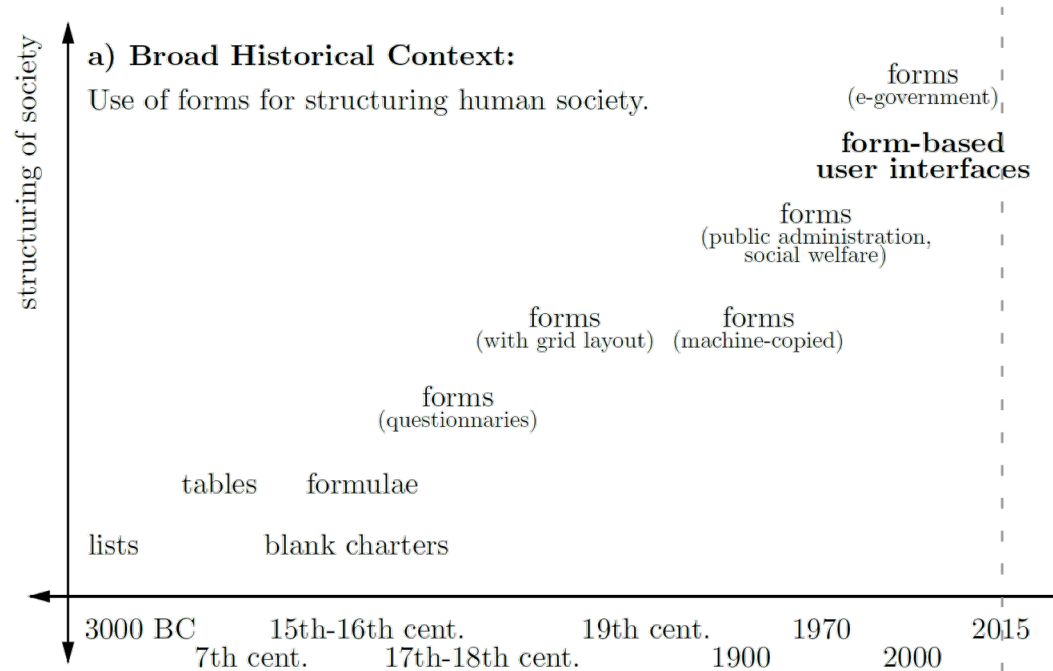


Chart Source: Harms, Johannes. "Past, Present, and Future of Form-Based User Interfaces: Innovative Design for Evolving the 'Form' User Interface Metaphor." Dissertation, 2015. <https://johannesharms.com/publications/harms2016forms.pdf>.

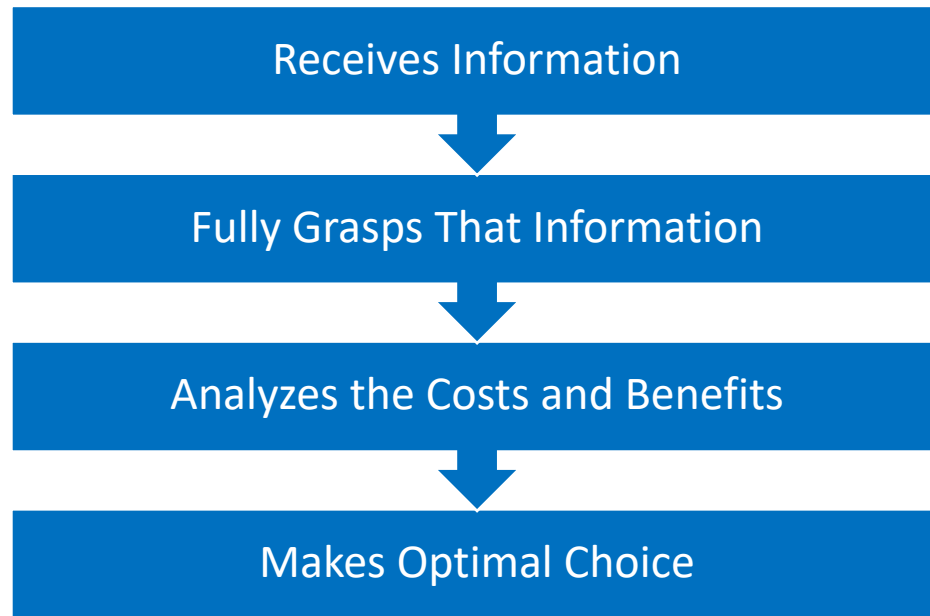
Image Source: Twyman, Michael. "Forms Design and the History of Forms." vimeo.com, February 17, 2017. https://vimeo.com/245363946?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=16687675.



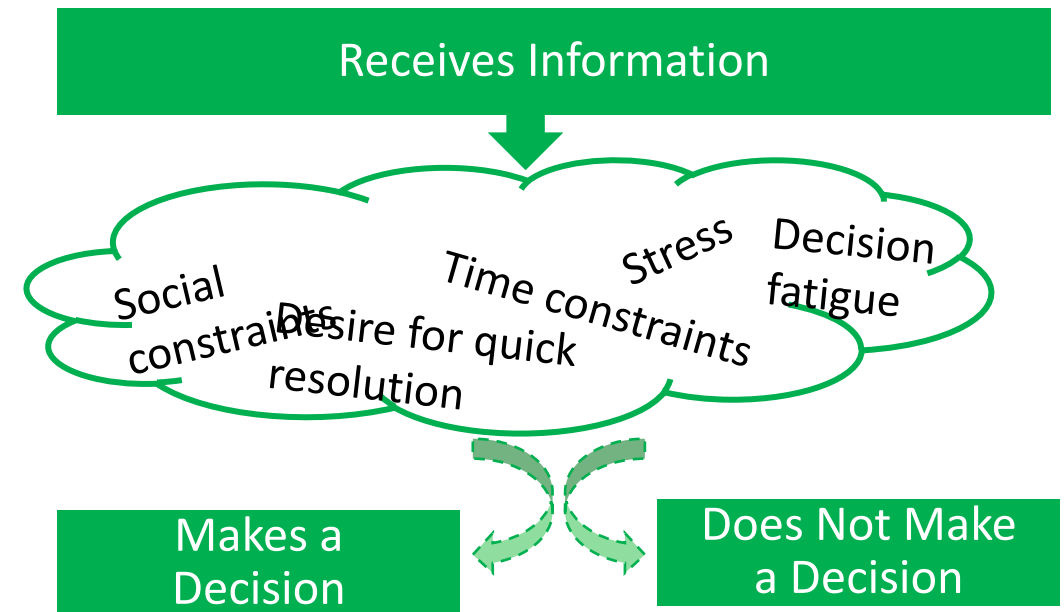
The Question Behavioral Economics Poses for People Who Make Forms

What really determines individual decisions?

The Rational Agent Model



The Behavioral Model



Source: Michael Hayes, Senior Programs Manager for the federal OCSE, "Spock or Simpson? Using Behavioral Science to Improve Child Support Performance," August 22, 2019



Behavioral Economics: A Working Definition

An approach to communications, policies, and procedures that analyzes and reshapes information and structural factors guiding engagement with program participants to make programs work better *for them*.*

* And not worse for anyone else!

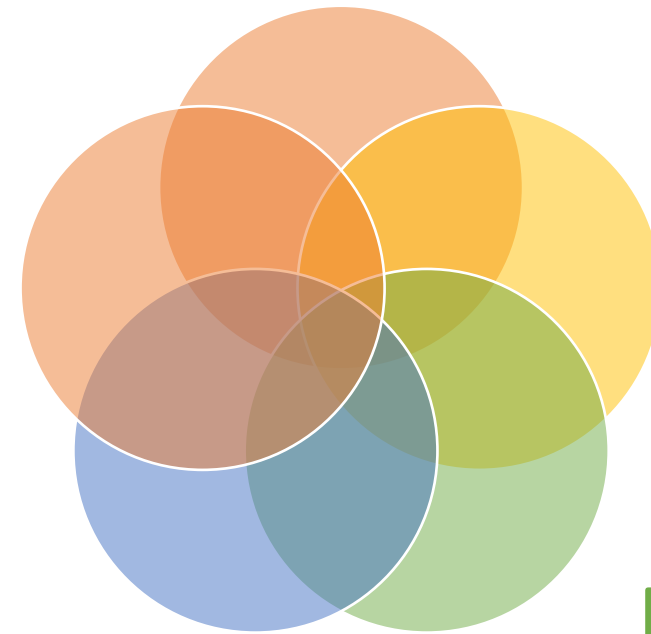
Behavioral Economics

Procedural Justice

Design Thinking

Plain Language

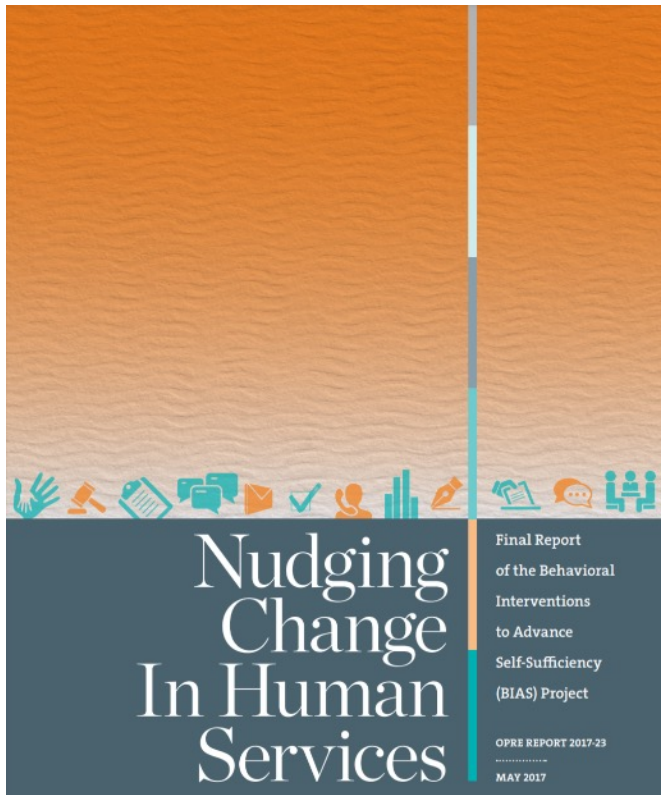
User Experience Design



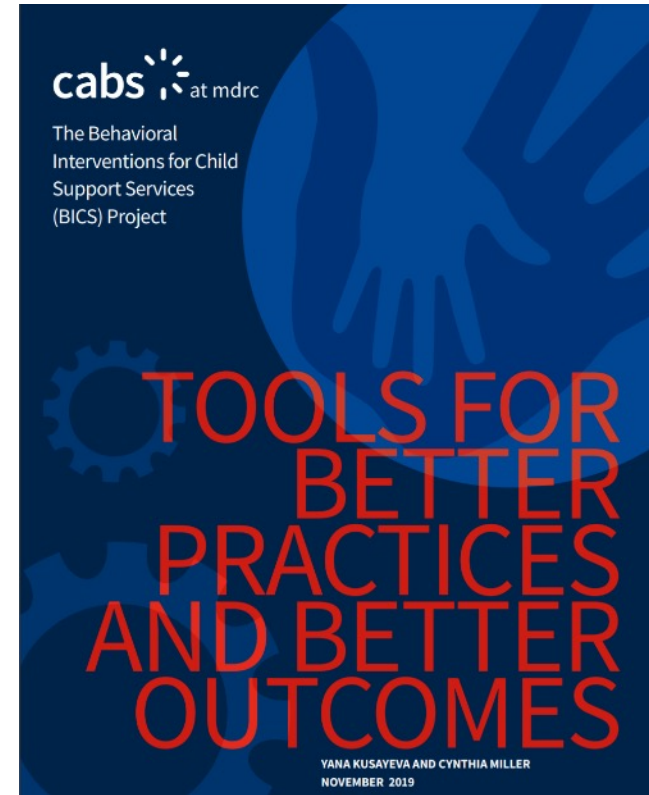


Examples of Behavioral Economics in Child Support

Behavioral Insights to Advance Self-sufficiency (BIAS)



Behavioral Interventions for Child Support Services (BICS)





Behavioral Techniques You Encounter Every Day



1. Personalization

Shaping a response or tool around someone's personal identity ("you" or "I")



Example

Beginning a letter with "Hello, Wilma" rather than "To Debit Card Users"



2. Social Proof

Drawing attention to the opinions or actions of others to guide decision-making



"Billions and Billions Served"



3. Channel and Hassle Factors

Elements that make it either easier (channel) or harder (hassle) for people to take some action



Channel: Moving a case over directly from assisted to non-assisted

Hassle: The referral process for assistance cases when that person only wants TANF or medical assistance, not child support

versus





Examples of Behavioral Economics in Child Support

Before Behavioral Intervention

You Owe at Least \$5,000 in Child Support Debt
Let Us Help You
PAY IT OFF!
2 Weeks Only!

From 11/12/13 through 11/27/13 only

Pay a minimum of \$5,000 toward your NYC/Department of Social Services (DSS) child support government debt, and in exchange:

- We will match your payment and reduce your arrears if you have debt permanently owed to NYC/DSS, up to the amount owed to the government
- We will remove 9% interest charged on a child support judgment owed to the government if you pay the principal amount in full.
- We may lift child support arrest warrants.
- Your payment may help you avoid driver's license suspension and other penalties.
- We may be able to connect you to employment services, mediation services and other debt reduction programs.

Come to the HRA/OCSE Customer Service Walk-In Center and Make Your Payment by Certified Check, Money Order, Expertpay.com or e-childsupport.com

151 West Broadway
4th Floor
New York, New York

M-F: 8 a.m.-7 p.m.
Sat: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Call 311

NYC Human Resources Administration Department of Social Services Office of Child Support Enforcement

VS

After Behavioral Intervention

HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT
P.O. BOX 880
CANAL STREET STATION
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10013-0880

NYC Human Resources Administration Department of Social Services

OCSE-305b (E) 4/5/2016

11502 04678

05/05/2016
Case ID: [REDACTED]

Dear Parent:
I want to make sure you don't lose a chance to be part of Pay It Off—a special, limited-time opportunity to double the value of payments you make toward child support debt owed to New York City.

The last time we offered Pay It Off, about 50% of participants paid off every cent that they owed the government. Most of them paid off the debt during the program itself. Some needed only a few months of additional payments to finish off everything.

How Pay It Off Works

- Between June 1 and June 15, 2016, you make a lump sum payment of \$1,000 or more toward child support debt owed to the New York City Department of Social Services (DSS)
- We match that payment 100%, up to the total amount you owe the New York City DSS

How Pay It Off Might Work in Your Case

	Amount You Owe to NYC DSS as of 3/25/2016	Your Payment	Our Match	Total Amount Reduced	What You Still Owe
Example 1	\$5,442.16	\$1,360.54	\$1,360.54	\$2,721.08	\$2,721.08
Example 2	\$5,442.16	\$2,176.86	\$2,176.86	\$4,353.73	\$1,088.43
Example 3	\$5,442.16	\$2,721.08	\$2,721.08	\$5,442.16	\$0

Where and When You Can Make Your Payment

Customer Service Walk-In Center
151 West Broadway, 4th floor
(between Worth Street and Thomas Street)
New York, NY 10013

Monday–Friday 8 am–7 pm
Saturday 9 am–5 pm
(Saturday hours on June 4 and June 11 only)

Pay By

- Certified check
- Personal check
- Money order
- Credit card
- Debit card (must have Visa or Mastercard logo)

Questions?
Call 929-252-5200 between 8 am–7 pm, Monday–Friday, and 9 am–5 pm, Saturday (June 4 and June 11 only).
We've only offered Pay It Off two times before. Don't lose this chance to put child support debt behind you—forever!

Sincerely,
Frances Pardus-abbadessa, Executive Deputy Commissioner

11502 04678 05000 001 001 004678

Pay off NYC child support debt.
Twice as fast.
Two weeks only.

Pay It Off
June 1–15, 2016

For two weeks, pay \$1,000 or more toward child support debt owed to NYC and we will match that payment.

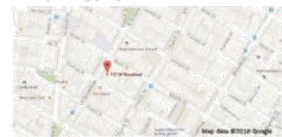
Two weeks to get two times the credit. And maybe put child support debt behind you. Forever.



- \$1,000 is only the minimum payment. In 2014 the average payment was about \$2,300
- The debt must be owed to the New York City Department of Social Services (DSS)
- We can't reduce your debt below \$0. But we really want to help you get to \$0

How to Pay
Come to our Customer Service Walk-In Center
151 West Broadway, 4th floor, New York, NY 10013
(between Worth St. and Thomas St. in Manhattan)

Nearby Subways
Chambers St. stations for the 1, 2, 3, A, C, J, or Z
Brooklyn Bridge/City Hall station for the 4, 5, or 6



Hours
Monday–Friday 8 am–7 pm
Saturday 9 am–5 pm (June 4 and 11 only)

Pay By

- credit card
- debit card (must have Visa or MasterCard logo)
- certified check
- personal check
- money order

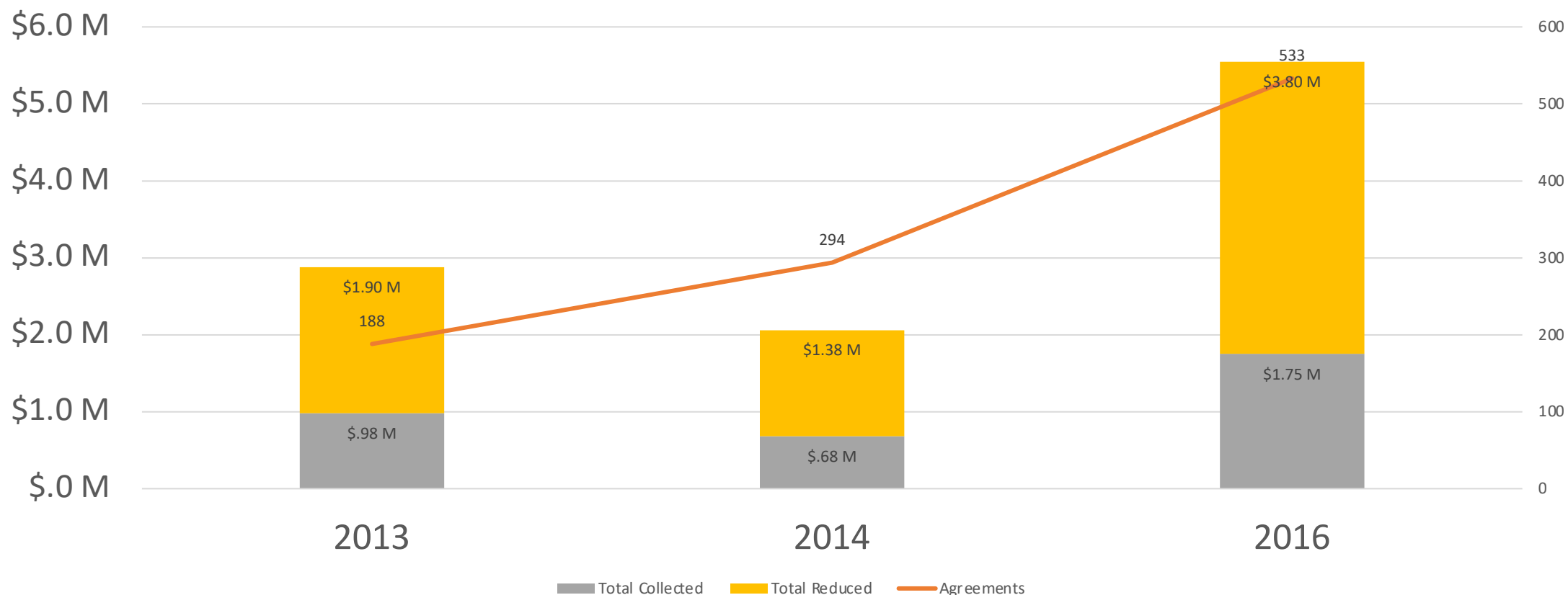
For more information, call 929-252-5200

NYC Human Resources Administration Department of Social Services Office of Child Support Enforcement



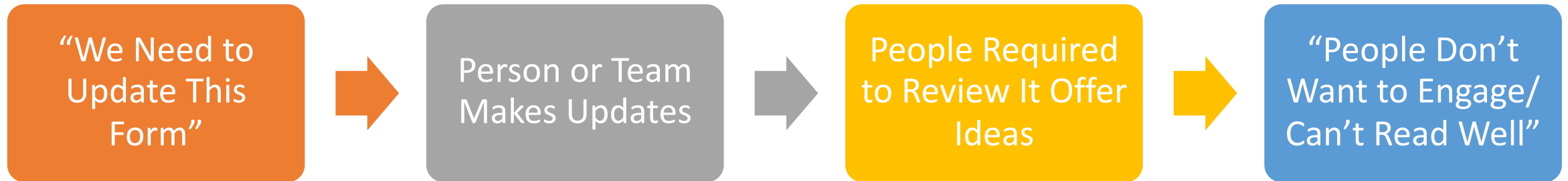
Making Behavioral Economics an Everyday Practice

Collection and Debt-Reduction Amounts and Agreements in Pay It Off (2013, 2014, 2016)



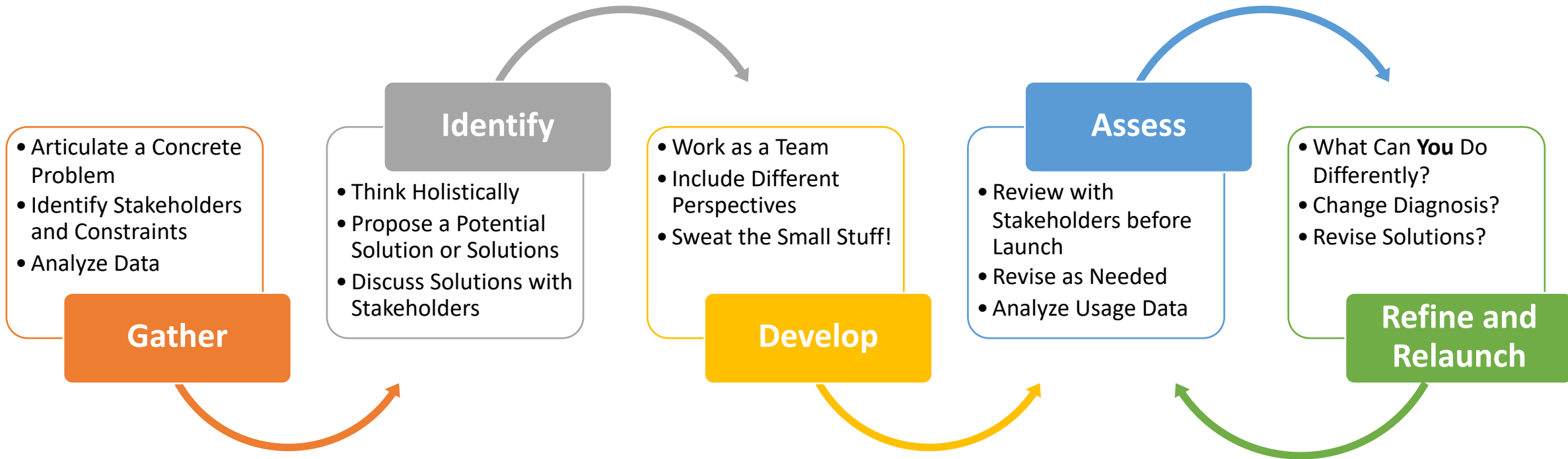


The Business-as-Usual Process





The Process for Developing Behaviorally Informed Forms



Getting Started



1. Established Our Team
 - **Planning Specialist** – Team Lead with 25+ years of child support experience as worker, trainer, supervisor, support strategic initiatives
 - **Administrative Assistant** with many years of writing experience
 - **Management Analyst** to help with technical possibilities
 - **Attorney** with many years of child support experience to ensure messages were legally correct
2. Scheduled remote bi-weekly one-hour meetings



Decide which forms to redesign

We wanted our project to have an impact on work spanning multiple units of the office to ensure all workers and clients could benefit.



- Surveyed workers
 - Which forms had questions that clients often answer differently than we expect?
 - Which forms do clients not "seem" to respond to?
 - Which forms are "not pretty" or cause distress to look at?
- Narrowed down the list



Some items worked on:

- ✓ Initial cover letter for cases without orders
 - Also created new information page
- ✓ Financial information form for setting or modifying support
- ✓ Paternity affidavits for bio-mom and alleged father to identify child's possible father
- ✓ Parenting decisions affidavit
- ✓ Genetic testing appointment notice
- ✓ Description of support received or paid
- ✓ Series of nonpayment letters
- ✓ Welcome letters for cases with orders
 - Also created a new child support summary page
- ✓ Agreement to forgive past-due support
- ✓ Cover letter for intergovernmental cases without orders
- ✓ Locate form



Design constraints

- Follow County and Attorney's Office Brand Standards
- Black and white
- Header and footer
 - Developed new header and footer with more ways to contact
 - Solidifying call-to-action focus
- Word documents
 - Fillable Form Fields and drop-down menu options to try to keep workers using the created forms
 - Protected document
 - Good for workers across the program, varied technical and writing skills



The Form Development Process: Gather

- **Gather**

- Identify Stakeholders and Constraints

- Stakeholders

- Parents and guardians applying for or in possession of a child support order
 - Parents who are required to pay support
 - People who have been identified as potential fathers
 - Child Support staff

- Constraints

- Specifics noted earlier

- Articulate a Concrete Problem
- Identify Stakeholders and Constraints
- Analyze Data

Gather



The Form Development Process: Gather

- **Gather**
 - Analyze Data

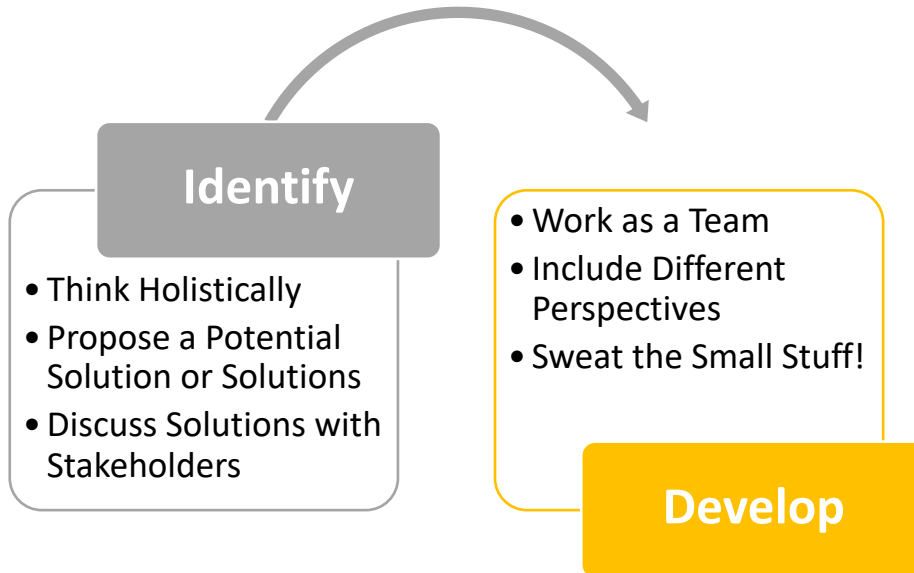
- Articulate a Concrete Problem
- Identify Stakeholders and Constraints
- Analyze Data

Gather

Section #	Question #	Element	Content	Audience	Subject
Pre	[0]	No subordinate elements	Case#	PCF	Case
I	[0]	Heading	Personal Information	PCF	PCF
I	1	No subordinate elements	Name	PCF	PCF
I	2	[i]	DOB	PCF	PCF
I	2	[ii]	Place of birth	PCF	PCF
I	3	[i]	Mailing address	PCF	PCF
I	3	[ii]	Mailing as residence	PCF	PCF
I	3	[iii]	Current residence (vs. mailing)	PCF	PCF
I	4	[i]	Home phone	PCF	PCF
I	4	[ii]	Cell phone	PCF	PCF
I	4	[iii]	Other (phone)	PCF	PCF
I	5	[i]	Going to school (Y/N)	PCF	PCF
I	5	[ii]	School part-time or full-time	PCF	PCF
I	5	[iii]	School name	PCF	PCF
I	5	[d]	"Career field"	PCF	PCF
I	5	[e]	Hours of classes	PCF	PCF
I	5	[f]	Planned graduation	PCF	PCF
I	6	[i]	Married (Y/N)	PCF	PCF
I	6	a	Married to whom	PCF	PCF



The Form Development Process: Identify and Develop



- **Identify and Develop**
 - Much of this already discussed
 - Only want to add one point: everyone on this project—including the staff we consulted who work with staff—worked hard to get the details right
 - One example: how do we refer to the various people on the case?



The Form Development Process: Identify and Develop: Details Matter

Original: In the middle of the last page

Do you have any safety concerns regarding any of the alleged fathers listed in this affidavit?

No ____ Yes ____

If yes, we would like to discuss these concerns with you. Please list a phone number where we can reach you during the daytime: _____

Early Version: At the bottom of the first page



Safety Information

Are you concerned about your safety or the safety of your children because of another person on this child support case? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you checked "Yes," we will contact you by phone to discuss your concerns. We can hide details from this form and other ones to reduce the chances that the other person can find you.

Final Version: At the bottom of the first page



Safety Information

Are you concerned about your safety or the safety of your children because of another person on this child support case? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you checked "Yes," we will contact you by phone to discuss your concerns. We can hide details from this form and other ones to reduce the chances that the other person can find you.

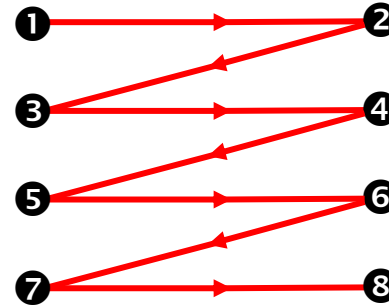
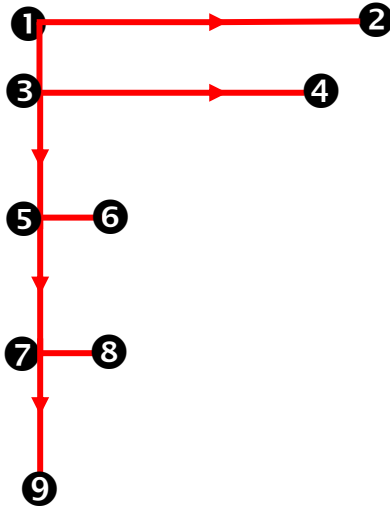


Principles for Developing Behaviorally Informed Forms and Processes

- ❑ • **Simplify policies and reduce choices**
Try to reduce the problems clouding decision-making or at least don't make things worse ("First, do no harm")
- ❑ • **Use better tools**
Write notices using simple language, design them thoughtfully, and use delivery mechanisms likely to increase engagement
- ❑ • **Communicate expectations**
Always provide an explicit statement (or call to action) telling people exactly how to respond to any given communication and tell them by when their response needs to be made



Develop Your Forms to Be Skimmed (Because Everyone Skims)



“[T]he ‘new norm’ in reading is *skimming*, with word-spotting and browsing through the text. Many readers now use an F or Z pattern when reading in which they sample the first line and then word-spot through the rest of the text. When the reading brain skims like this, it reduces time allocated to deep reading processes.

Maryanne Wolf
[“Skim Reading Is the New Normal.
The Effect on Society Is Profound”](#)



Practical Tips for Language and Design

Language	
✓	Start with the takeaway
✓	Use common words and short sentences (under 30 syllables per sentence)
✓	Use personal pronouns (“we,” “you,” etc.)

Design	
✓	Structure the design to highlight levels of importance
✓	Emphasize white space and a ragged right margin
✓	Use icons and other graphics to reinforce meaning



The Form Development Process

Assess

- Review with Stakeholders before Launch
- Revise as Needed
- Analyze Usage Data

- **Review with Stakeholders before Launch**

- Formal review process
- Pre-launch focus group

- **Revise as Needed**

- Quasi-formal test period of 3 months
- Post-launch focus group
- Both led to revisions

Question 1
Put everything that applies to establishment and mod first and things that are specific but not mod could come after that so that modification clients don't need to complete the entire doc. Worried about address completed because of error. Language being too high ("communicate"). Length of it. Info up front and be able to say, you don't need to complete after this point. When receiving, the expense section, their math doesn't add up

Question 2
Would prefer page 5 on spousal support, etc. **Would like to know about children from other parents and where those orders are how much they're receiving per month.** Some clients both payers and receivers for different. How much for how many children and where those orders (county, state, etc.). In court pleadings, just use a number. What if people have multiple marriages? Say it's related to specific person? (Neither marriage and past support apply to modifications.)

Question 3
If you have safety concerns, call and get a resource immediately. When she gets this form with a y in safety concerns, sends a DHS safety form. **Want specific forms for disability. Preferred documentation is medial release consent form along with a medical provider certification.** (Jodi says we would send those out.) Wants household separated out as its own section. Feel like ownership is the most important thing. **Ownership privileged.** Want a lot more money about other orders and what



Financial Statement

Before

Financial Statement

Information in this document may be used to set, modify, or enforce child support.

Child Support Case #: _____

I: Personal Information

1. My name is: _____
2. My date of birth: _____ My place of birth: _____
3. My mailing address is: _____
This mailing address is the same as where I live. ☐ Yes ☐ No, I live at this address: _____
4. My contact numbers are:
☐ Home Phone: _____
☐ Cell Phone: _____
☐ Other: _____

NOTE: You MUST report all changes to the child support office.

5. I am going to school. ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, ☐ Part time ☐ Full time
School Name: _____
My career field is _____
I have classes: _____ hours per week. I plan to graduate on _____
6. Have you ever been married? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes,
 - a. Who are/were you married to: _____
 - b. Marriage: ☐ Date: _____ ☐ Place: _____
 - c. Separation: ☐ Date: _____
 - d. Divorce: ☐ Date: _____ ☐ Place: _____

II: Monthly Expenses and Debt

7. There are _____ adults and _____ child(ren) living in my household.
8. My average monthly household expenses are \$ _____.
9. Below is the breakdown of **my portion only** of the average monthly expenses and debt in my household:

After



Child Support Services
Office of the Ramsey County Attorney

An Elected Office of
RAMSEY COUNTY

Financial Information

Case [autocompleted]

Why We Ask This Information

Either you or someone connected to you opened a child support case or asked to change an existing child support order. To get the child support amount right, we need to know about your income and expenses. For that same reason, we also ask you about the other parent.



What We May Do with This Information

We may use the information you give us to help set or change a child support order. Eventually, this form may be filed with the court. Like other court documents, it may be shared with others, including the other parent.

Information about You

Your Contact Information



Name: [autocompleted] Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Mailing Address: [autocompleted]

If you live at a different address, write it in here: _____

Your Phone Number: _____ Is this a cell phone number? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you have another phone number, write it in here: _____

When any of this information changes, tell us. Don't miss updates about your case!

Additional Details about You



Language Preference

Tell us what language you prefer to use when we communicate with you:

Preferred Spoken Language: _____ Preferred Written Language: _____



Safety Information

Are you concerned about your safety or the safety of your children because of another person on this child support case? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you checked "Yes," we will contact you by phone to discuss your concerns. We can hide details from this form and other ones to reduce the chances that the other person can find you.

Mail or In-Person
121.7th Place E, Suite 4500
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Phone
651-266-3344
Fax
651-266-3300

Email
ChildSupport@RamseyCounty.us



The Form Development Process: Identify and Develop: Details Matter

Before

VIII: Past Support

The court may look at each parent's responsibility to support the child(ren) of this case, for up to two years before the court case starts.

40. ☐ I paid direct child support, OR ☐ the other party has paid me direct child support, of \$_____ for the time period: _____ to _____.

** Proof of any direct child support payments is required.

41. Do you want reimbursement for **past support**? (check all that apply)

☐ No ☐ Yes: _____ past basic support / _____ past medical* / _____ past childcare*

*You must attach proof of past medical/dental and childcare expenses.

(Past medical support includes the child's portion of the medical/dental premiums and unreimbursed expenses for the child.)

After



Past Child Support

If you are filling out this form to **change** an existing child support order, skip this section.

Sometimes the court will order the other parent to pay their share of the last two years of child support, child care costs, medical costs, or costs related to child's birth.

Do you want the court to order the other parent to pay for:

Past child support? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Medical costs for the child? ☐ Yes ☐ No

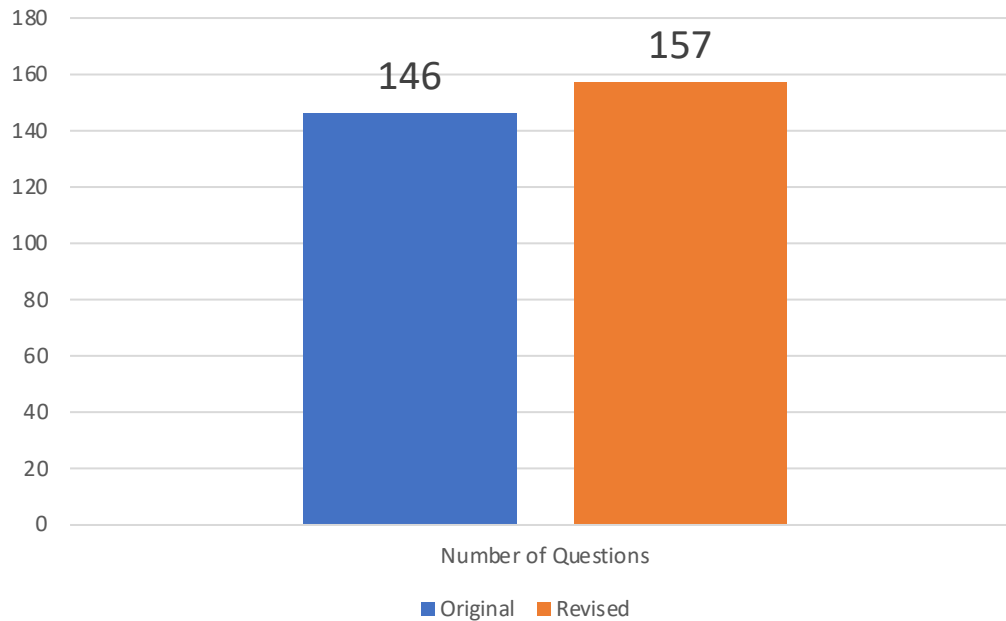
Child care costs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Costs for the child's birth? ☐ Yes ☐ No

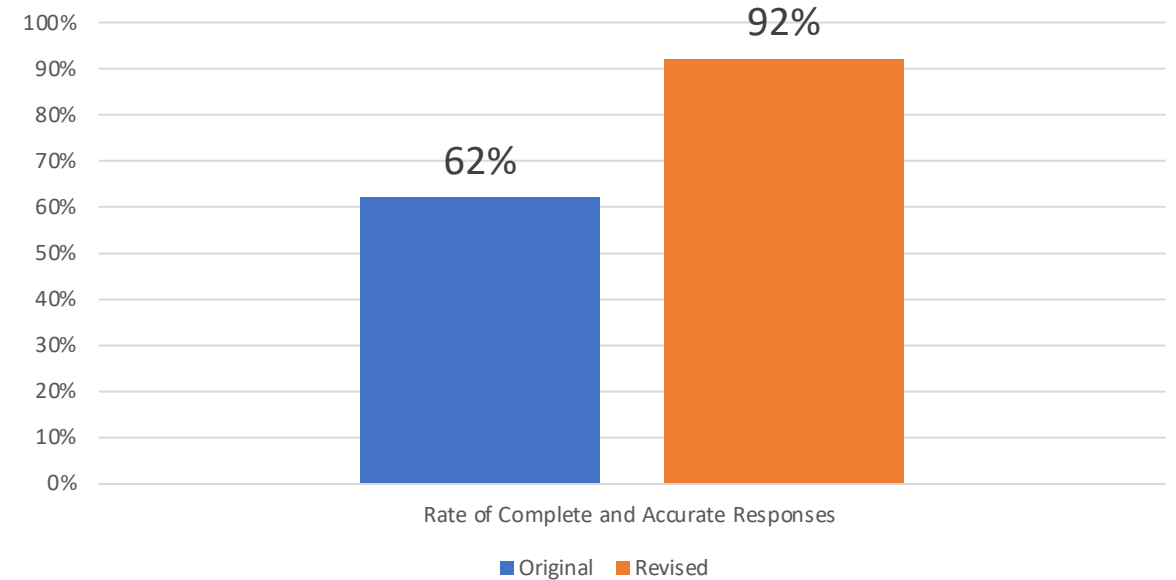


Financial Statement Results

Financial Statement: Number of Questions per Form



Financial Statement: Rate of Complete and Accurate Responses



A 30 percentage point (48%) increase in completion rate.
Increased even when asking more questions about ability to pay.



Mother's Paternity Affidavit

Before

IV-D Case Number: _____
Child(ren): _____

Did you have sexual intercourse with **ANY OTHER MAN** in the period beginning SIX weeks before and ending SIX weeks after you think you became pregnant with this child?
No ____ Yes ____

List EVERY OTHER MAN that you had sexual intercourse with, beginning 6 weeks before until 6 weeks after when you became pregnant **with this child**, even if you believe that he is not the child's father.

Name and Date of Birth	Phone	Address or who does he live with?	Employer	Any other info? (His parents' names, phone #'s, arrest record)
1)				
2)				

If you need additional space to list other possible fathers of this child, please attach another sheet.

Do you have any safety concerns regarding any of the alleged fathers listed in this affidavit?
No ____ Yes ____
If yes, we would like to discuss these concerns with you. Please list a phone number where we can reach you during the daytime: _____

Please give us any other information that will help us get in contact with the alleged father: _____

If you have any of the five items listed below, please check the box and send them to:
Ramsey County Attorney's Office
Child Support Enforcement Section
121 Seventh Place East, Suite 4500
St. Paul, MN 55101

☐ A photograph of the man you have named as the child's father.
☐ A copy of your marriage certificate. ☐ A copy of your divorce papers.
☐ A copy of each child's birth certificate. ☐ A copy of your genetic test results.

YOU MUST COMPLETE THIS SECTION OR YOUR DOCUMENT WILL BE INCOMPLETE.

During the period that my child was conceived, I, _____, had sexual intercourse with each man listed as my child's possible biological father.

I understand that the county attorney's office does not represent the child(ren) in this action, me, the other parent, or other custodian of the child(ren).

I understand that I must submit to genetic testing of the child(ren) and myself.

I understand that I must cooperate in the establishment of paternity and enforcement of child support.

I declare under penalty of perjury that everything I have stated in this document is true and correct. This document is signed in _____ County, Minnesota. Minn. Stat. § 358.116.

DATE _____ Signature of Mother _____

vers. 10/17/2017 4

After

Mother's Paternity Affidavit Case: 0000000000-00

Physical Details
Eye Color: _____ Hair Color: _____ Height: _____
Weight: _____ Glasses: _____ Facial Hair: _____
Tattoos, Scars, or Other Identifying Details: _____

Other People the Father Knows

	Name	Address	Phone Number
The Father's Mother			
The Father's Father			
The Person the Father Currently Lives With			

Relationships

Your Relationship with the Father
Did you ever live with the father? ☐ Yes ☐ No If "yes," when? _____
Were you and the father ever married? ☐ Yes – Legally ☐ Yes – Culturally ☐ No
If "yes," when? _____ Where? _____
Did your relationship with the father end in divorce? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If "yes," where did the divorce happen (city, state, and country)? _____
Before your child was born, were you married to anyone other than the father? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If you were married, did you legally divorce that person before your child's birth? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If "yes," where did the divorce happen (city, state, and country)? _____

Other Relationships
The court requires us to ask if someone else might be your child's father.
In the 6 weeks before or the 6 weeks after you believe you became pregnant, did you have sexual intercourse with any other man? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If "yes," use the space on the next page to tell us any information you can about the other person or people. "More Information" can mean such things as the person's employer, parents' names and phone numbers, or criminal record.

Page 3 of 4



The Form Development Process: Identify and Develop: Details Matter

Before

Did you have sexual intercourse with **ANY OTHER MAN** in the period beginning SIX weeks before and ending SIX weeks after you think you became pregnant with this child?

No ____ Yes ____

List **EVERY OTHER MAN** that you had sexual intercourse with, beginning 6 weeks before until 6 weeks after when you became pregnant **with this child**, even if you believe that he is not the child's father.

Name and Date of Birth	Phone	Address or who does he live with?	Employer	Any other info? (His parents' names, phone #s, arrest record)
1)				
2)				

If you need additional space to list other possible fathers of this child, please attach another sheet.

After

Other Relationships

The court requires us to ask if someone else might be your child's father.

In the 6 weeks before or the 6 weeks after you believe you became pregnant, did you have sexual intercourse with any other man? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If "yes," use the space on the next page to tell us any information you can about the other person or people. "More Information" can mean such things as the person's employer, parents' names and phone numbers, or criminal record.

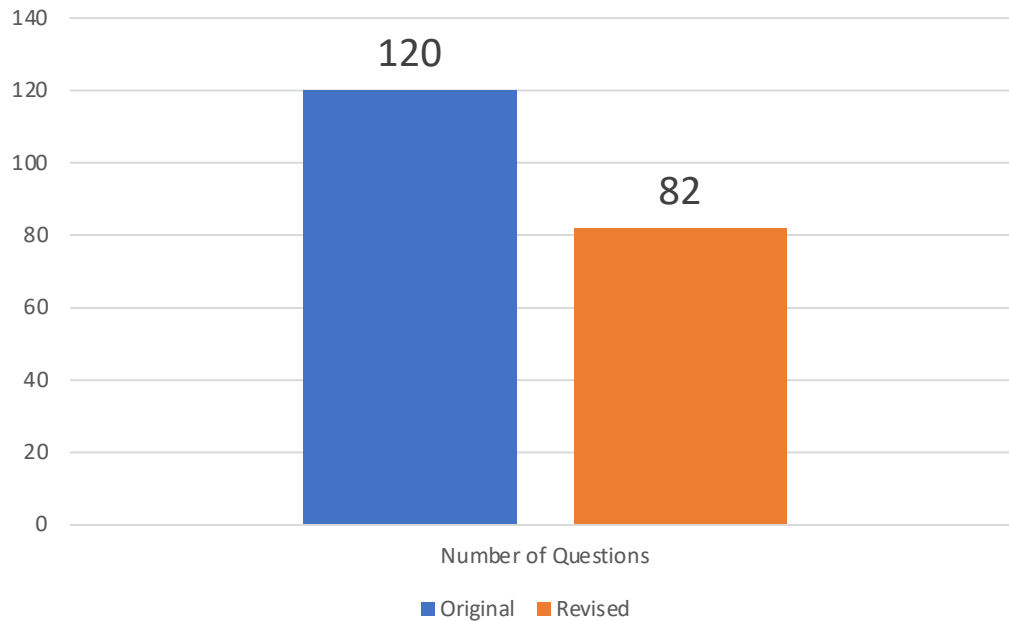
Name	Date of Birth	Address	Phone Number	More Information

Please attach additional sheets of paper to list more names or give additional details.

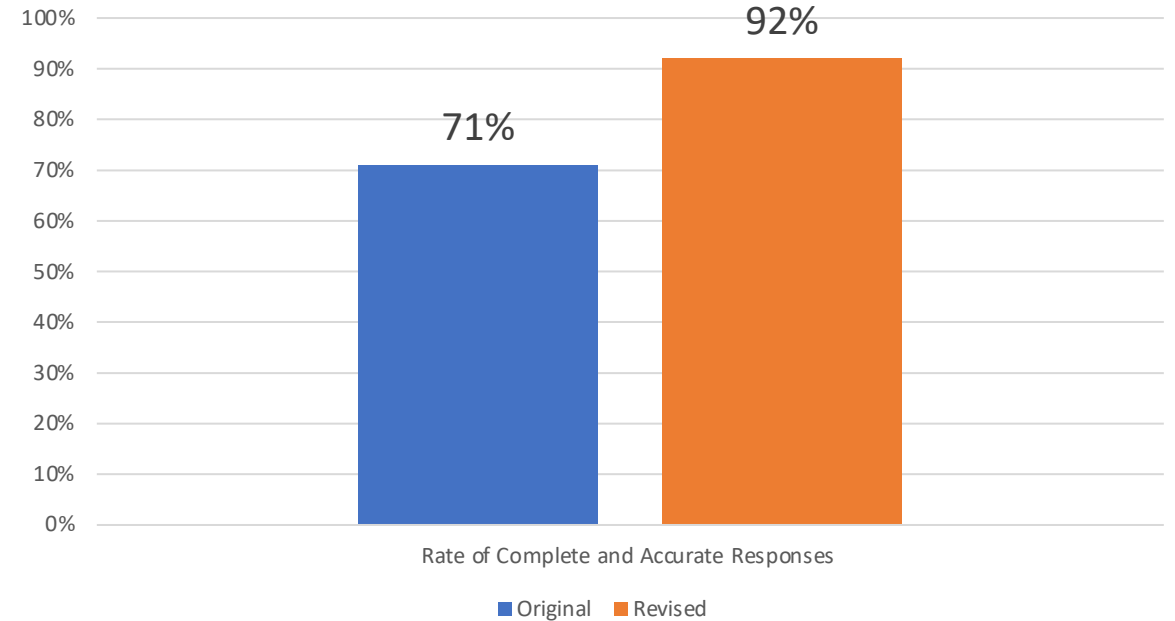


Mother's Paternity Affidavit Results

Paternity Affidavit: Number of Questions per Form



Paternity Affidavit: Rate of Complete and Accurate Responses



A 21 percentage point (29%) increase in completion rate.
Reduced the number of questions by 32%.



3rd Nonpayment Letter (Noncustodial Parent, Contempt)

Before



OFFICE OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY ATTORNEY
JOHN J. CHOI, COUNTY ATTORNEY

February 10, 2021

Party Name
Party Address
City, State, Zip

CP Name and NCP Name
Case: 0000000000-00
Court File: Court File#

Dear NCP Name:

We have not received payment for child support in more than 60 days.
Please contact me at 651-266-Your Ext, to discuss your situation and discuss payment options.

Your court ordered child support obligation for child(ren) name(s) is \$Monthly Obligation per month, and your current arrears balance is \$Arrears Balance.

If you're not able to pay your monthly obligation, the child support office can review your case to see if it qualifies for a modification or payment plan. Please contact me to request a review.

The following legal actions may be taken for nonpayment of child support:

- Driver's/Recreational/Occupational License Suspension
- State/Federal Tax Intercepts
- Passport Denial
- Student Grant Holds
- Credit Bureau Reporting
- Civil Contempt Charges

Please contact me to discuss your financial situation. If you are currently unemployed and find it difficult to make your monthly payments, there are resources to assist you:

Father Project: 612-724-3539	www.goodwilleasterseals.org
Goodwill/Easter Seals: 651-379-5800	www.goodwilleasterseals.org
Ujamaa Place: 651-526-8006	www.ujamaaplace.org
MN Workforce Center: 651-642-0363	www.jobconnectmn.com
Twin Cities Rise: 651-603-8520	www.twincitiesrise.org

Sincerely,

Name
Child Support Worker
651-266-Your Ext

CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION
121 7th Place E., Suite 4500 | Saint Paul, MN 55101
651-266-3344 | Fax: 651-266-3300 | ramseycountyattorney.org

An Elected Office of
RAMSEY COUNTY

After



Child Support Services
Office of the Ramsey County Attorney

An Elected Office of
RAMSEY COUNTY

1 Case: 0000000000-00
2 letter Name: Nonpayment: Possible Contempt Process
3 to we have the wrong address? Call us to correct it.
4 October 14, 2022

5 CP First and Last Name
6 Address
City, State ZIP

7 Hello, NCP First and Last Name,

8 To understand why you are not paying child support, we may have to bring your case to court. This is a serious step, and we want to be sure you understand what could happen if you do or do not go to court.

9 What Might Happen Next

10 We go forward with this process, you will receive legal documents that will require you to go to court. You must attend your court hearing on the date and time given in the documents.

11 At the hearing, the court will try to understand why you have not been paying. You will have to answer questions about your income and your ability to work.

12 The court will try to understand if you have willfully avoided payment. In other words, the court is trying to answer two questions: Can you truly not afford to pay your child support? Or do you have the money to pay but have chosen not to?

13 If the court decides that you are able to pay but have chosen not to, the court could order you to serve time in jail. The court could also order you to serve time in jail if you do not appear for certain types of court hearings.

14 So Now, You Can Respond Right Now

15 Please call me as soon as possible to discuss your case. With a few simple questions, I can find out if we can set up a payment agreement that will work for you. I can also see if you might qualify to have your child support order changed or refer you to services for housing, job training, or parenting, if those sound useful to you.

16 Calling me now could save you time and worry in the future.

17 Let's Talk about Your Case as Soon as Possible

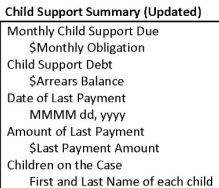
18 Call me at 651-266-####. I have worked with many parents in this situation and am ready to assist.

Worker's Name,
Ramsey County Child Support Worker

Mail or In-Person
121 7th Place E, Suite 4500
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Phone
651-266-3344
Fax
651-266-3300

Email
ChildSupport@RamseyCounty.us



Child Support Summary (Updated)
Monthly Child Support Due
\$Monthly Obligation
Child Support Debt
\$Arrears Balance
Date of Last Payment
MMMM dd, yyyy
Amount of Last Payment
\$Last Payment Amount
Children on the Case
First and Last Name of each child



The Form Development Process: Identify and Develop: Details Matter

Before

February 10, 2021

Party Name
Party Address
City, State, Zip

CP Name and NCP Name
Case: 0000000000-00
Court File: Court File#

Dear NCP Name:

After

Case: 0000000000-00

Letter Name: Nonpayment: Possible Contempt Process
Do we have the wrong address? Call us to correct it.

October 14, 2022

NCP First and Last Name
Address
City, State ZIP

Hello, NCP First and Last Name,

To understand why you are not paying child support, we may have to bring your case to court. This is a serious step, and we want to be sure you understand what could happen if you do or do not go to court.

Your case has moved into an urgent stage. Call us today to explain your situation.

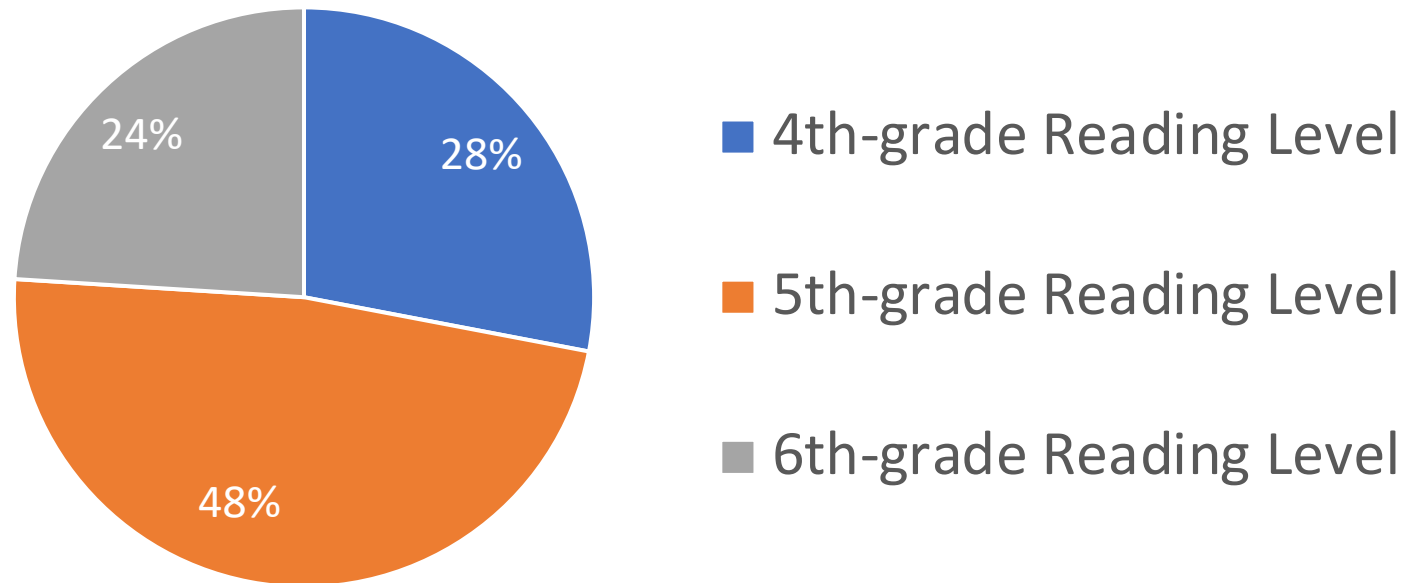
Child Support Summary (Updated)

Monthly Child Support Due
\$Monthly Obligation
Child Support Debt
\$Arrears Balance
Date of Last Payment
MMMM dd, yyyy
Amount of Last Payment
\$Last Payment Amount
Children on the Case
First and Last Name of each child



The Big Picture: How Accessible Are the Behaviorally Informed Forms?

Reading Levels of Revised Forms

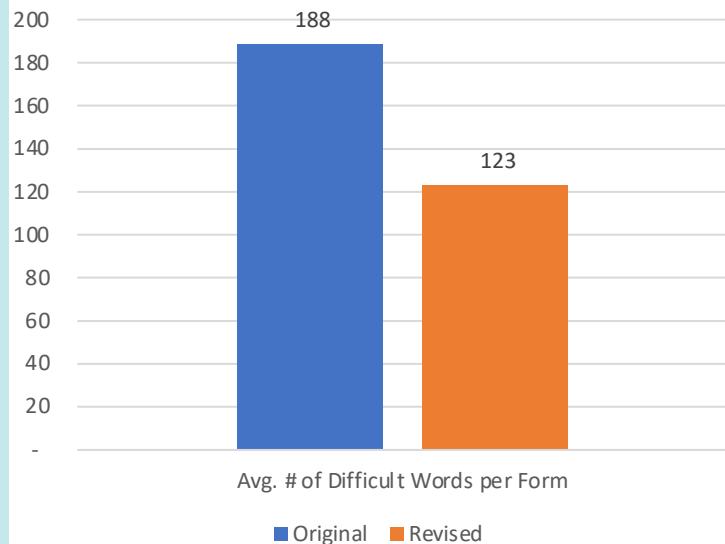


The average reading level for the 25 forms completed so far on this project is 5.3.
The highest reading level of any of the forms was 6.5.



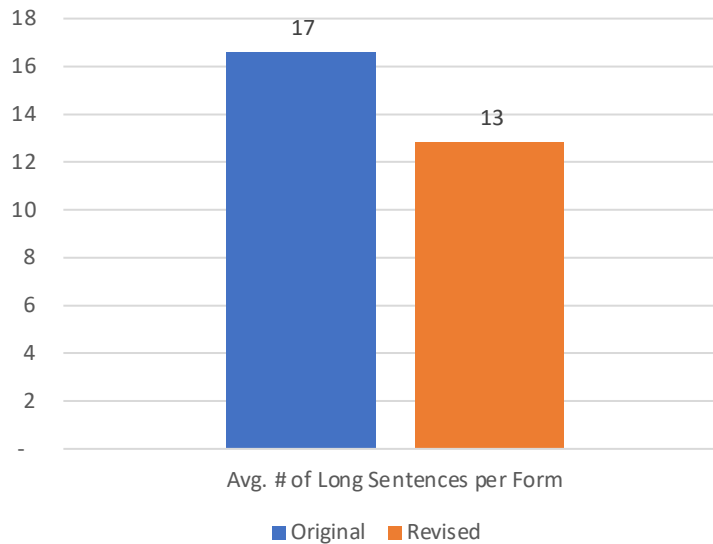
The Big Picture: What Qualities Help Make them Accessible?

Average # of Difficult Words per Form



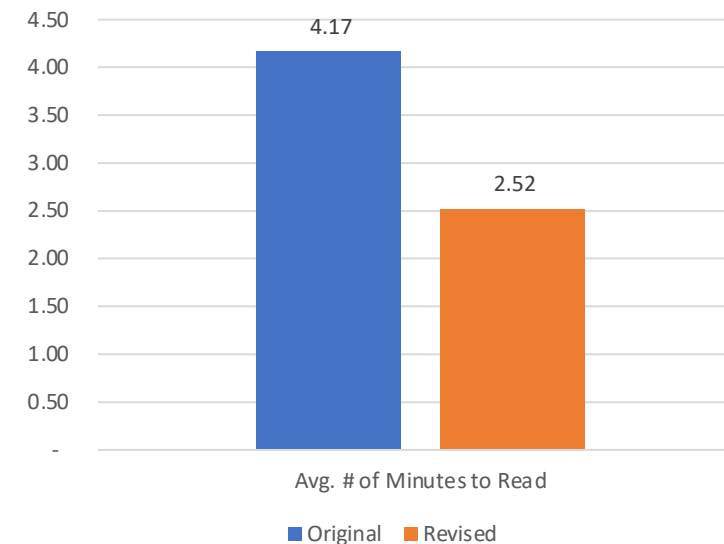
↑
**35%
reduction**

Average # of Long Sentences per Form



↑
**23%
reduction**

Average # of Minutes to Read



↑
**18%
reduction**



Implementation

- Word documents with form fields for personalization
 - Templates protected so worker can tab through each Form Field
- Documents are housed in SharePoint for access by all workers
- Workers can fill in each field manually or use a script (macro) to auto-fill the fields
- The auto-fill script pulls information (i.e. client name, address, and case number) from child support system and enters it into the document template.
 - If needed, the worker can edit items as needed before they are sent off to the client.

Options for clients to receive and complete forms

1

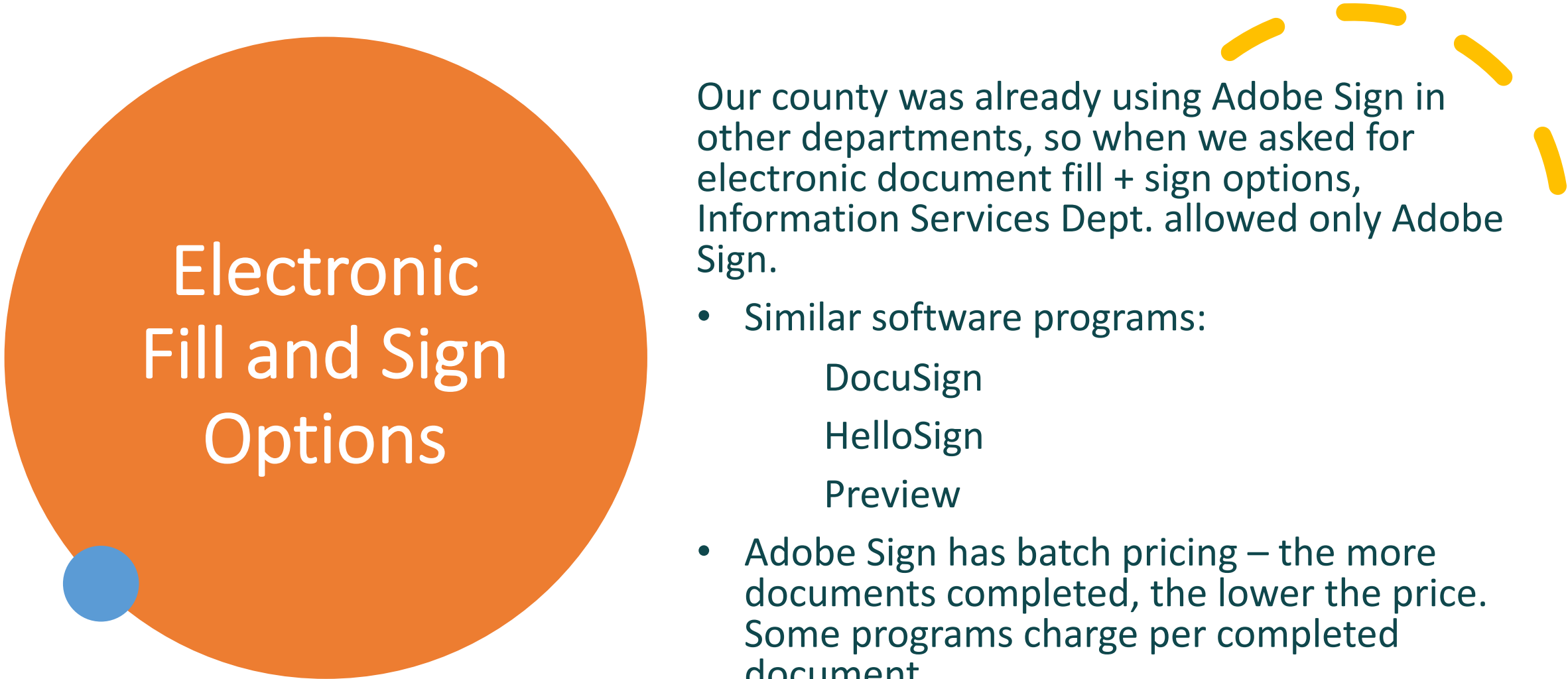
Print and send to client by U.S. mail to fill out by hand

2

Send PDF in email to client to print and fill out by hand

3

Send PDF by email through Adobe Sign for client to fill out and sign electronically



Electronic Fill and Sign Options

Our county was already using Adobe Sign in other departments, so when we asked for electronic document fill + sign options, Information Services Dept. allowed only Adobe Sign.

- Similar software programs:

DocuSign

HelloSign

Preview

- Adobe Sign has batch pricing – the more documents completed, the lower the price. Some programs charge per completed document.

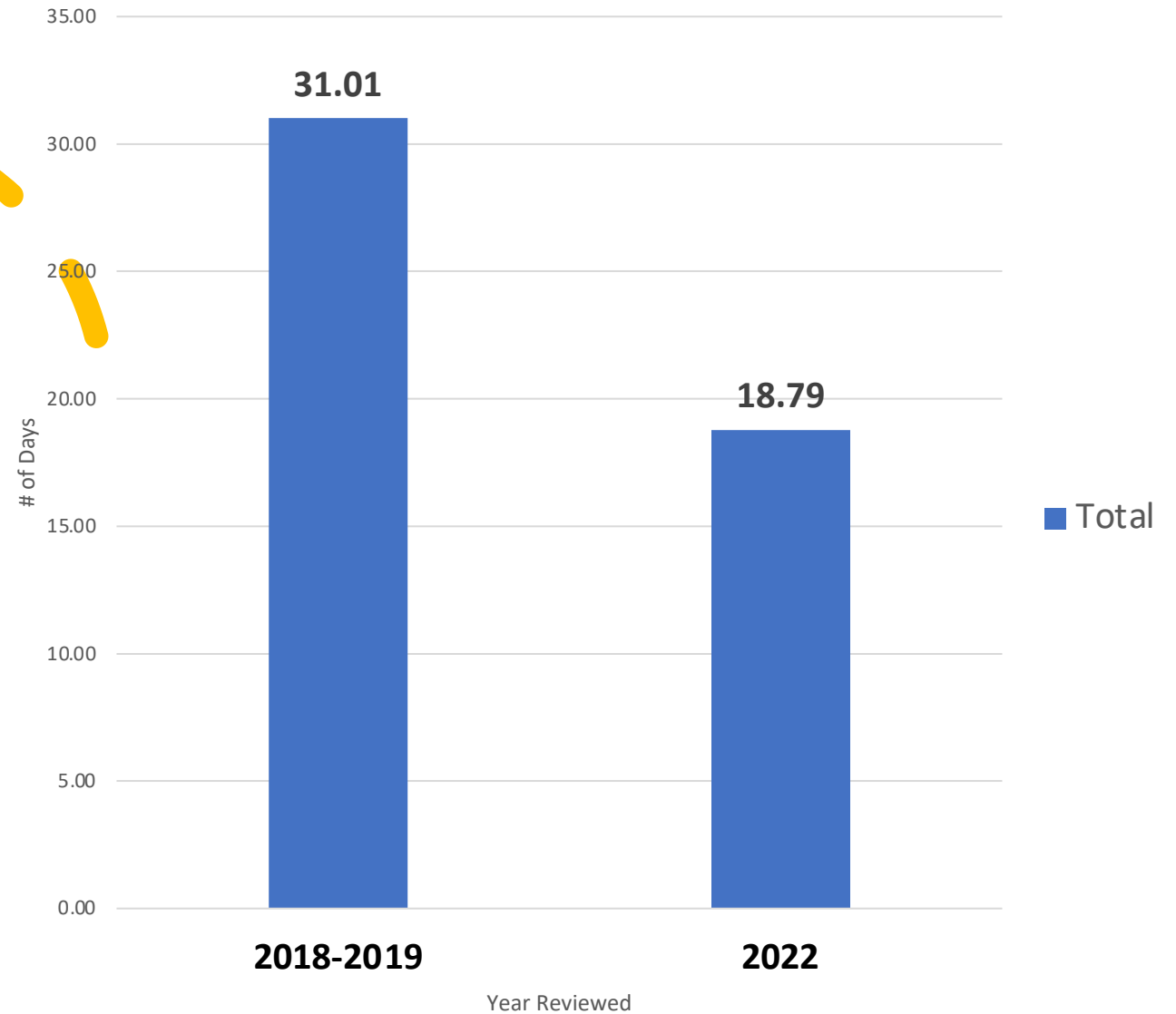


Adobe Sign - June 2021 to September 2022

- Started slow with only couple workers sending out items for all others
- Takes some time to create each form in document library
- Now, 27 workers use Adobe Sign
- Quickest response 1 minute!

Total Sent:	1345
Canceled or Rejected:	169
In Process:	302
Completed:	722
Expired:	152
Unique Senders:	27

Ramsey County reduced the average # of days to receive completed forms from clients by reworking forms using behavioral economics principles and changing processes





Worker response to new documents?

More friendly than
prior versions!

Easy to follow and
understand!

Conversational.
Great new image!

Better understood
and quicker
responses!

Now getting the
information we
need to proceed!

I love our new forms
and letters! They
make me happy to
look at them!



Questions, Answers, New Ideas



Contact Information

- Moderator** Trish Skophammer (she, her, hers)
trish.skophammer@co.ramsey.mn.us
- Presenter** Jodi Abel (she, her, hers)
jodi.abel@co.ramsey.mn.us
- Presenter** David Ramm (he, him, his)
david@grayspeakstrategies.com