



Oregon Department of Justice

Oregon Child Support Program

Supporting Parents to Support Children

Self-Assessment Report



South Sister from Sparks Lake in Deschutes County, Oregon

Federal Fiscal Year 2021

Prepared by the Program Analysts

March 2022

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I. Executive Summary

A. Introduction

The standards and criteria for state self-assessment review and report processes are established in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Chapter III, Part 308 (45 CFR 308). It specifies that states must conduct an annual review of eight required program criteria. Oregon submits its self-assessment results to the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) Region 10 Office of Regional Operations and to the OCSE Commissioner through the automated Self-Assessment Reporting System no later than six months after the review period.

This is Oregon’s twenty-third annual self-assessment. It covers the 12-month period from October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021. The assessment reviewed the following eight categories:

- Case Closure
- Establishment of Paternity and Support Orders
- Enforcement of Orders
- Disbursement of Collections
- Medical Support Enforcement
- Review and Adjustment (Modification)
- Intergovernmental Services
- Expedited Process

Background

In 1975, the state legislature established the Oregon Child Support Program as required by Title IV-D of the Social Security Act. The Oregon Department of Justice has administered the program since 2003. The Department’s Division of Child Support (DCS) maintains offices around the state and works with the Civil Recovery Section of the Department’s Civil Enforcement Division on certain judicial actions. The Department also contracts with 21 county District Attorney (DA) offices to assist in providing child support services. While active in state courts, the program primarily uses administrative processes to establish, modify, and enforce child support orders. The following tables are synopses of Oregon’s child support caseload and staffing as of September 30, 2021.

Table 1 — Program Information

Caseload Size		Types of Cases		Program Staffing	
DCS Caseload	112,825	Current Assistance	17,934	DCS Staff	557
DA Caseload	36,050	Former Assistance	88,858	DA Staff	127
Program Caseload	148,875	Never Assistance	42,083	Program Staff	684

B. Self-Assessment Results

Oregon’s efficiency rates and corresponding federal benchmarks are displayed below in Table 2.

Table 2 — Self-Assessment Results

Criterion	Cases Where Required Activity Occurred or Should Have Occurred	Cases Where Required Activity Occurred within Timeframe	Efficiency Rate (Confidence Level of Sample)	Federal Minimum Standard	Previous Year's Efficiency Rates
Case Closure	453	451	99.56%	90%	99.52%
Establishment	424	424	100%	75%	100%
Enforcement	453	450	99.34%	75%	99.78%
Disbursement	98,791	97,504	98.70%	75%	99.41%
Medical	408	408	100%	75%	99.76%
Review & Adjustment	426	421	98.83%	75%	98.58%
Intergovernmental	779	751	96.41%	75%	99.22%
Expedited Process 6-month	387	352	90.96%	75%	91.82%
Expedited Process 12-month	387	382	98.71%	90%	99.74%
TOTAL:	102,508				

C. Summary

Oregon surpassed the required federal compliance benchmarks in all program areas for the self-assessment review period. Therefore, a corrective action plan is not necessary.

II. Methodology

A. Introduction to Methodology

Oregon reviewed a focused sample group of child support cases in seven categories to determine compliance with the corresponding citations in 45 CFR 302 and 303 and the Social Security Act (Section 454B(c)(1)).

To conduct a statistically valid assessment and select a sample that would achieve a 90% confidence level, Oregon utilized focused samples. Oregon used the statistical equation in Figure 1 to achieve the 90% confidence level requirement.

$$n = \frac{(z \cdot \hat{a}/2)^2 \cdot X \cdot p(q)}{E^2}$$

Figure 1 — Confidence Level Statistical Equation

The formula for Oregon’s statistical equation to achieve its confidence level states:

- n = the sample size
- z = the z score
- \hat{a} = 1 – confidence interval
- p = probability
- q = 1 – p
- E = tolerable error rate

Oregon’s desired error rate is 5% or less. A presumed probability of 50-50 was used (50% chance the desired outcome would occur, and 50% chance the desired outcome would not occur). Using the formula above and assuming a 90% confidence level, a table was created to indicate the number of cases required for review per identified population. A comparative table for a 95% confidence level was also used to determine the number of cases to sample to achieve the 95% confidence level as shown above in Figure 2.

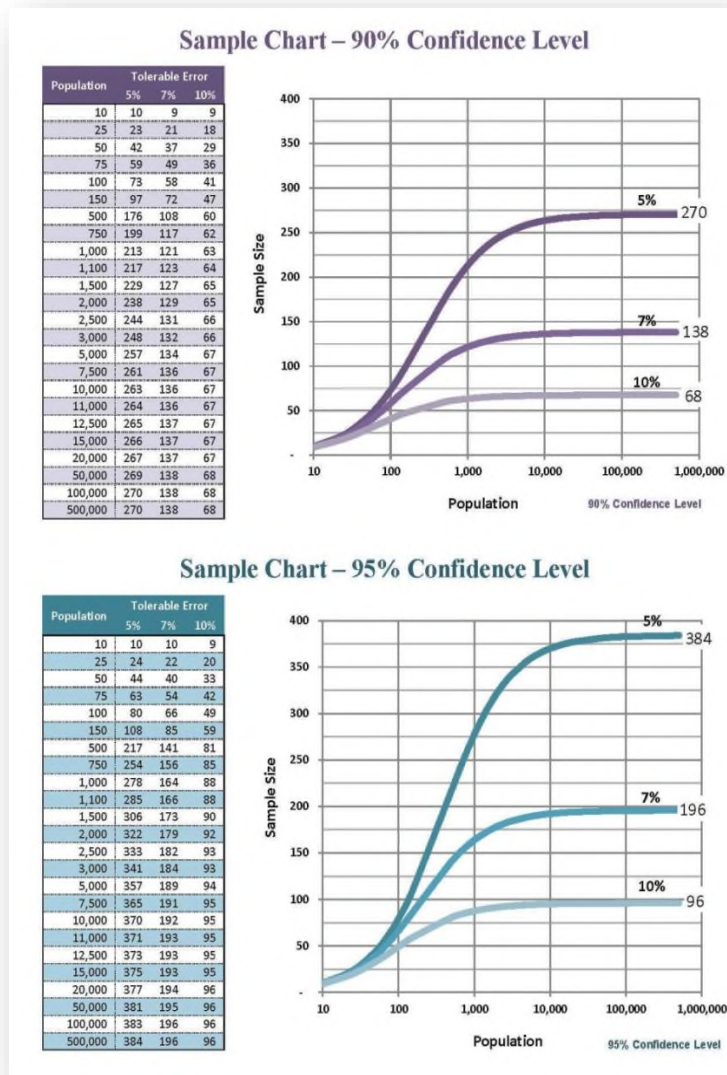


Figure 2 — Confidence Level Chart

To ensure that a case was included in the review for a single category only, except for Disbursement, each category sample was run separately from the others. Cases selected for the first category sample were not considered in the next category sample and so forth until the final category sample was pulled. This process resulted in a reduction of the total available population for the subsequent categories; therefore, the population sizes for most categories do not reflect the actual number of cases.

B. State Self-Assessment Coordination

Program Compliance Criteria

Oregon continues to use the March 1998 Self-Assessment Core Workgroup Report model to conduct case assessments. With the implementation of Oregon's new child support system, Origin, all cases receive an automated review, and all cases receiving an error from Origin go through an additional review conducted by analysts.

To establish an efficiency rate, Oregon used the formula specified in the Self-Assessment Core Workgroup Report:

Efficiency [Cases with appropriate action/Total number of cases with required action]

Case Review – General Rules

The assessment is performance-based, focusing on outcomes rather than processes. Each category is reviewed for compliance with corresponding federal regulations established in 45 CFR 308. The following relevant definitions apply:

- An *outcome* is the result of case action within a specific category.
- An *action* is an appropriate outcome within a specific category.
- An *error* is either a failure to take a required action or taking an incorrect action within a specific category.

The assessment of a case is based on four general case-evaluation rules:

- A case is reviewed only on the criteria for which it was sampled.
- A case receives only one action or error in the category for which it is sampled.
- Compliance timeframes for initiating reciprocal and responding reciprocal interstate cases are reviewed separately.
- If an outcome is pending or not successfully completed due to the timeframe expiring after the review period, the previous required action is evaluated.

Cases are initially screened for possible exclusion. A case is excluded if:

- No action was necessary during the review period.
- The action was completed prior to, or after, the review period.
- There was insufficient time to take the last required action, and no other actions were previously required.
- The case qualified for closure pursuant to 45 CFR 303.11, and it was not in the sample for compliance with case closure criteria.
- Other reasons relevant to unique criteria exist.

Concur Case Review Process

Oregon implemented the Concur Case Review Process during the 2004 Self-Assessment as an enhancement to the case review process. This process is used every year, providing many benefits to the program:

- 1) The program efficiency rating increases when the field provides sufficient documentation validating a case action that was previously considered not in compliance.
- 2) Program confidence in the reported outcomes improves because of field participation in the determination of the outcomes.
- 3) Program awareness of the review categories and related criteria is increased.
- 4) The understanding of federal requirements is increased in both the Division of Child Support and District Attorney offices.

Prior to field office review, the system reviews the cases and determines whether the outcome qualifies as an “action” (appropriate action taken) or an “error” (failed to take required action or system unable to evaluate). A program analyst reviews the error cases to determine the last required action and whether the outcome can be changed to an action. Cases still labeled as errors after program analyst review are referred to their respective field office representatives for additional reviews. The representatives either concur or do not concur with the analyst’s determination and provide additional information to support their determination.

The analysts consider any additional information provided by the field office and make a final determination regarding compliance. This determination considers the applicable federal regulations associated with each of the review categories. The outcome of the determination is shared with the respective field representatives. The outcomes are then finalized, and the report is published and submitted to OCSE.

In response to the Concur Case Review Process this year, two offices did not concur with analyst findings. Based on information provided by workers in the field, analysts were able to determine that two cases previously marked as errors had sufficient documentation to reverse the findings.

C. Universe Definition and Sampling Procedures

To obtain focused samples, categories were broadly defined to avoid the systematic exclusion of a population subset. Separate populations of cases were identified for each category based on the specified definitions. The population samples included cases that were excluded due to definition ambiguity or because of human error during data entry. For this reason, an exclusion rate was anticipated within each sample. Sample sizes were based on the number of cases required to achieve 95% confidence level, ensuring that the final review resulted in the minimum sample size required for a 90% confidence level.

D. Summary of Methodology

Table 3 provides descriptions of the unique sample data extracted for each criterion. The population size varies each year and determines the minimum number of cases needed to achieve the 90% confidence level. For each criterion, the program exceeded the minimum number of cases required.

Table 3 – 2021 Self-Assessment Sample Details

Criterion	Sample Data Description	Case Population	# Cases to Achieve 90% Confidence Interval	Sample Size	System Reviewed	Manually Reviewed
Case Closure	Any case qualifying for closure or closed during the review period.	39,162	270	454	454	99
Establishment	Any case in which a new administrative paternity-only order or support order was needed, in process, or finalized during the review period.	17,220	267	449	449	36
Enforcement	Any case with an ongoing income withholding in place. Also includes cases where a new or repeated enforcement action was required during the review period.	101,058	270	457	457	87
Disbursement	Any case with a payment during the review period. Analysis is conducted on the last payment received for each case.	98,791* *Represents only the last disbursement per case	270* *Based on population of the last disbursement per case	98,791	98,791	0
Medical	Any case with a support order established or modified during the review period.	5,707	260	408	408	178
Review & Adjustment (Modification)	Any case with an order that can be modified. Also includes cases with a modification action initiated no more than 6 months prior to the review period, or the modification was finalized or denied during the review period.	6,339	263	427	427	116

Criterion	Sample Data Description	Case Population	# Cases to Achieve 90% Confidence Interval	Sample Size	System Reviewed	Manually Reviewed
Intergovernmental	Any case coded with a responding or initiating state Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) code other than Oregon during the review period. Also includes any case with a possible need for an initiating reciprocal.	22,913	268	782	782	603
Expedited Process	Any case with an administrative support order established during the review period.	2,235	244	387	387	98

III. Self-Assessment Results

A. Introduction to Self-Assessment Results

Federal regulations require each state to meet a minimum compliance benchmark of 75% for each required program category except for Expedited Processes (12-month) and Case Closure. These two program categories must meet a minimum compliance benchmark of 90%.

Oregon surpassed the required federal compliance benchmarks in all program areas for the review period October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021.

B. Self-Assessment Results

Table 4 – Self-Assessment Results

Criterion	Cases Where Required Activity Occurred or Should Have Occurred	Cases Where Required Activity Occurred within Timeframe	Efficiency Rate (Confidence Level of Sample)	Federal Minimum Standard	Previous Year's Efficiency Rates
Case Closure	453	451	99.56%	90%	99.52%
Establishment	424	424	100%	75%	100%
Enforcement	453	450	99.34%	75%	99.78%
Disbursement	98,791	97,504	98.70%	75%	99.41%
Medical	408	408	100%	75%	99.76%
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Intergovernmental	779	751	96.41%	75%	99.22%
Expedited Process 6-month	387	352	90.96%	75%	91.82%
Expedited Process 12-month	387	382	98.71%	90%	99.74%
TOTAL:	102,508				

C. Discussion of Self-Assessment Results

The following section provides a detailed breakdown by review category of the population, sample size, cases reviewed, and errors found during the 2021 Self-Assessment.

It is important to consider that the error breakdown shows the percentage of errors found in the sampling reviewed. When the percentage of errors is compared to the total population of cases, the resulting figure represents the number of errors that would reasonably be found if the entire program caseload had been reviewed. For example, if the Case Closure category had a 96% efficiency rate, using the error rate of 4% and multiplying it by the total population of closed cases within the review period (39,162*0.04), there is a reasonable potential for 1,566 total case closure errors within the program caseload. However, since duplicate cases are removed from the populations prior to the sample extraction, not all populations are representative of an accurate error rate.

Case Closure Review

Table 5 – 2021 Case Closure Efficiency

2021 Case Closure Efficiency		99.56%
Federal Benchmark		90%
Population Size		39,162
Cases Sampled		453
Cases Reviewed		453
Cases Met Federal Benchmark		451
Error Description	CFR Reference	Errors
Did not send closure notice to parent/person who receives support	45 CFR 303.11(d)(4)	1
Did not qualify for closure	45 CFR 303.11(b)(1)-(12)	1
	Total Case Closure Errors	2

Oregon continues to outperform the required 90% federal benchmark for case closure. Of the cases reviewed, only one did not qualify for closure during the review period. The other error related to notifying the receiving party of the intent to close the case. In the reviewed case, the party's location was unknown, but procedure was not followed to issue the notice to the participant's last known address.

Establishment Review

Table 6 - 2021 Establishment Efficiency

2021 Establishment Efficiency	100%
Federal Benchmark	75%
Population Size	17,220
Cases Sampled	424
Cases Reviewed	424
Cases Met Federal Benchmark	424
Total Establishment Errors	0

For the third year in a row, Oregon received a 100% efficiency rate for the establishment category. Manual review was conducted to ensure the cases in the sample qualified for evaluation in the category. During the review, 26 cases, or approximately 6% of the sample, were excluded. The number of exclusions is down from the 15% reported in the prior year. Technical staff are continuing to refine selection criteria to represent only qualifying cases as well as all actions qualifying for analysis in the category.

Enforcement Review

Table 7 - 2021 Enforcement Efficiency

2021 Enforcement Efficiency	99.34%	
Federal Benchmark	75%	
Population Size	101,058	
Cases Sampled	453	
Cases Reviewed	453	
Cases Met Federal Benchmark	450	
Error Description	CFR Reference	Errors
Did not complete other enforcement activities within required timeframe	45 CFR 303.6(c)(2)	1
Did not issue withholding within 2 business days	45 CFR 308.2(c)(2)	2
Total Enforcement Errors		3

Oregon experienced a slight decrease in efficiency for the enforcement category compared to the prior fiscal year but maintained less than a 1% error rate. In two of the reviewed cases, withholding orders were not issued within a two-day timeframe, and one case required other enforcement action that was not completed.

Disbursement Review

Table 8 - 2021 Disbursement Efficiency

2021 Disbursement Efficiency		98.70%
Federal Benchmark		75%
Population Size		98,791
Cases Sampled		98,791
Cases Reviewed		98,791
Cases Met Federal Benchmark		97,504
Error Description	CFR Reference	Errors
Did not disburse collection within two working days after receipt	45 CFR 308.2(d)(1)	1,287
	Total Disbursement Errors	1,287

Oregon’s efficiency in Disbursement has fluctuated over the last ten years but has not dipped below 90% during that time. For the first time since moving completely to Origin, the program achieved an efficiency of less than 99% in the disbursement category. No systemic issues were identified as contributing to the errors. Although efficiency decreased, Oregon remains well above the required 75% efficiency rate for this category.

Medical Review

Table 9 - 2021 Medical Efficiency

2021 Medical Efficiency		100%
Federal Benchmark		75%
Population Size		5,707
Cases Sampled		408
Cases Reviewed		408
Cases Met Federal Benchmark		408
	Total Medical Errors	0

All cases reviewed in the medical category ordered at least one participant to provide healthcare coverage if available. This was only the second time Oregon achieved a 100% efficiency in the Medical category. Standardized support calculations and language help to ensure medical coverage is considered in all orders.

Review and Adjustment (Modification) Review

Table 10 - 2021 Review and Adjustment (Modification) Efficiency

Review and Adjustment (Modification) Efficiency		98.83%
Federal Benchmark		75%
Population Size		6,339
Cases Sampled		426
Cases Reviewed		426
Cases Met Federal Benchmark		421
Error Description	CFR Reference	Errors
Modification not completed within required timeframe	45 CFR 303.8(e)	5
Total Modification Errors		5

Oregon saw a slight increase in efficiency for review and adjustment during the 2021 review year. All identified errors were related to not completing a modification within 180 days. The entire 2021 review period occurred during a global pandemic. The increase in performance related to modifications illustrates the dedication of child support staff to helping families during the most trying times.

Intergovernmental Review

Table 11 - 2021 Intergovernmental Efficiency

2021 Intergovernmental Efficiency		96.14%
Federal Benchmark		75%
Population Size		22,913
Cases Sampled		779
Cases Reviewed		779
Cases Met Federal Benchmark		751
Error Description – Initiating Intergovernmental	CFR Reference	Errors
Did not notify responding state of case closure and provide reason for closure within required timeframe	45 CFR 303.7(c)(11)	1
Did not notify responding state of new information within required timeframe	45 CFR 303.7(a)(7)	2
Did not refer case to responding jurisdiction within 20 calendar days	45 CFR 303.7(c)(4)	4
Did not notify other jurisdiction of closure within 10 business days	45 CFR 303.7(c)(11)	1
Total Initiating Intergovernmental Errors		8
Error Description – Responding Intergovernmental	CFR Reference	Errors
Did not close case or withdraw IWO within required timeframe	45 CFR 308.2(g)(2)(vii) 45 CFR 303.7(d)(9)	9
Did not notify initiating jurisdiction of new information received within required timeframe	45 CFR 303.7(a)(7)	8
Did not respond to inquiries from initiating jurisdiction within required timeframe	45 CFR 303.7(b)(4)	2
Did not notify other jurisdiction of participant's location in another state within required timeframe	45 CFR 303.7(d)(3)	1
Total Responding Intergovernmental Errors		20
Total Intergovernmental Errors		28

Oregon experienced a drop of nearly 3.5% in efficiency in the intergovernmental category during the 2021 review period. Even with the large drop, the efficiency rate remains above the level achieved in the prior system. The automations performed by Origin helped to maintain an efficiency over 95% while some manual processes fell outside of federal timeframes.

Expedited Process Review 6-month

Table 12 - 2021 Expedited Process - 6-month Efficiency

2021 Expedited Process – 6-month Efficiency		90.96%
Federal Benchmark		75%
Population Size		2,235
Cases Sampled		387
Cases Reviewed		387
Cases Met Federal Benchmark		352
Error Description	CFR Reference	Errors
6-month federal timeframe to establish paternity and to establish, modify, and enforce support orders	45 CFR 303.101(b)(2)(i) and 308.2(h)(1)(i)	35
6-Month Expedited Process Errors		35

The 6-month expedited process efficiency rate in Oregon experienced a drop for the second year in a row. The disruption in normal business practices due to the continuing pandemic contributed to another year of decline. However, at nearly 91% efficiency, Oregon easily surpassed the required 75% efficiency for the 6-month expedited process category.

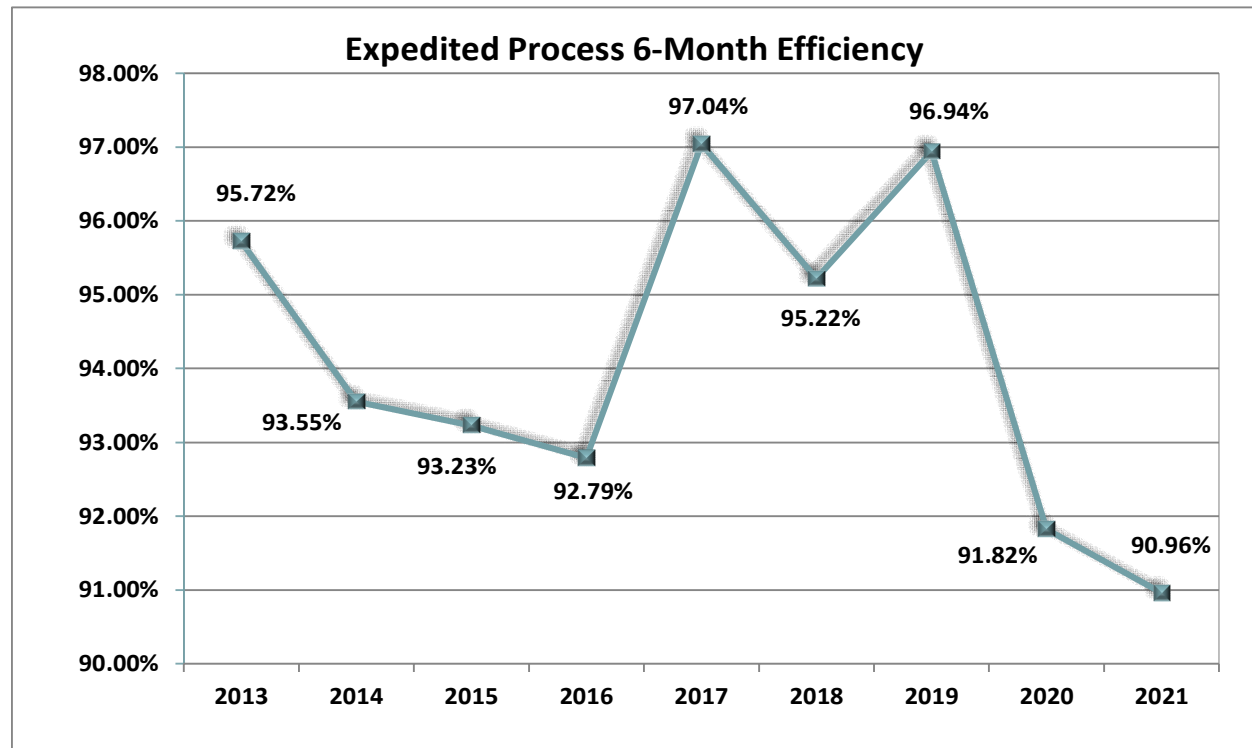


Figure 3 - Expedited Process 6-Month Efficiency

Expedited Process Review 12-month

Table 13 - 2021 Expedited Process - 12-month Efficiency

2021 Expedited Process - 12-month Efficiency		98.71%
Federal Benchmark		90%
Population Size		2,235
Cases Sampled		387
Cases Reviewed		387
Cases Met Federal Benchmark		382
Error Description	CFR Reference	Errors
12-month federal timeframe to establish paternity and to establish, modify, and enforce support orders		5
12-Month Expedited Process Errors		5

Along with the drop in efficiency for the expedited process 6-month category, the 12-month category dropped 1% compared to the 2020 review period. Despite the efficiency drop, Oregon continues to perform at well above the 90% federal benchmark for expedited process efficiency.

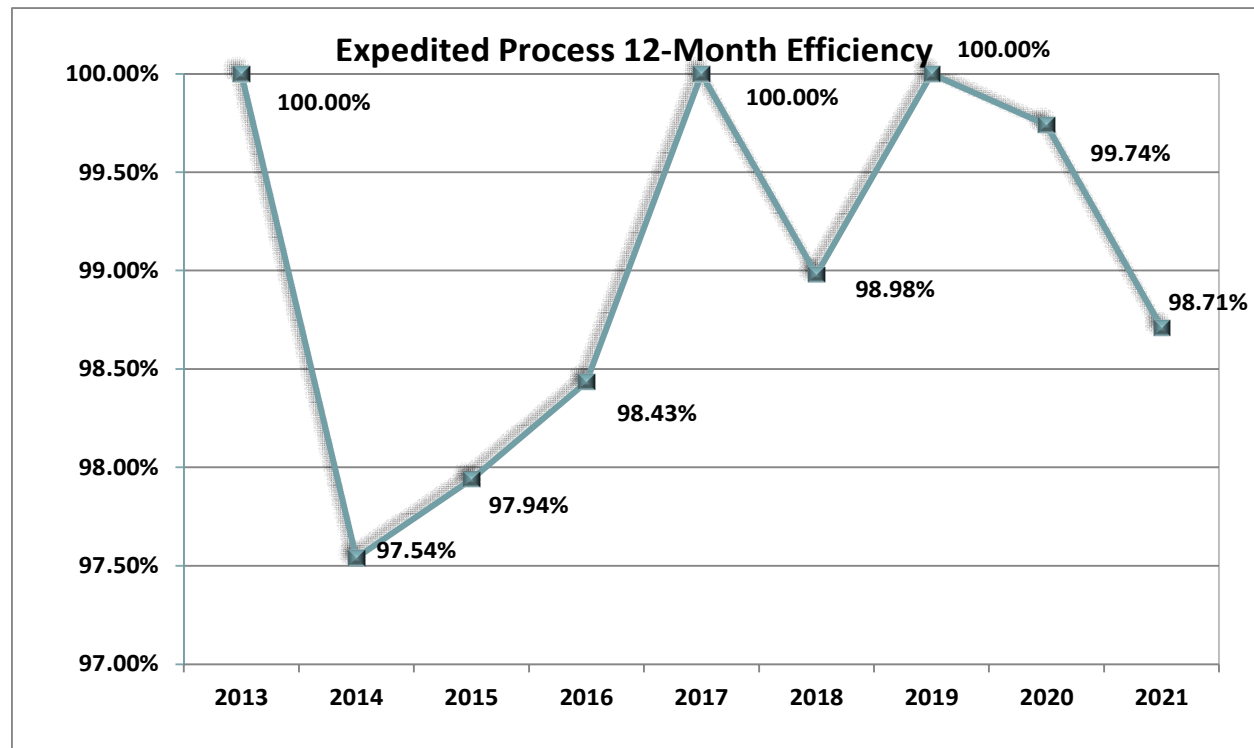


Figure 4 – Expedited Process 12-Month Efficiency

The charts and figures in this section indicate actions were required on 3,717 cases, excluding the disbursement category, within the review period. There were 78 errors across the categories. Based on the ratio of errors to cases requiring actions, Oregon experienced a 0.8 percentage point increase in overall errors compared to last year (2020=1.3%; 2021=2.1%). Although Oregon experienced an overall decrease in efficiency, the downturn is minimal especially considering the challenges presented by the ongoing global pandemic. The automation Origin provides benefited the families of Oregon by allowing staff to easily continue providing support services while working in less than ideal conditions.

D. Summary of Self-Assessment Results

Oregon surpassed the required federal compliance benchmarks in all eight required program areas. Three categories showed an increase in efficiency from the prior review period, and five categories showed decreases. Prior years of program efficiency rates by FSA category are displayed below in Table 14.

Table 14 – Self-Assessment Results Over Five Years

Criterion	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from Previous Year
Case Closure	94.62%	98.70%	96.81%	99.52%	99.56%	0.04
Establishment	87.00%	88.22%	100%	100%	100%	0
Enforcement	93.86%	99.27%	81.19%	99.78%	99.34%	-0.44
Disbursement	97.87%	97.65%	99.68%	99.41%	98.70%	-0.71
Medical	96.20%	94.76%	100%	99.76%	100%	0.24
Review & Adjustment (Modification)	96.19%	94.83%	98.98%	98.58%	98.83%	0.25
Intergovernmental	86.62%	90.63%	97.26%	99.22%	95.77%	-3.45
Expedited Process 6-month	97.04%	95.22%	96.94%	91.82%	90.96%	-0.86
Expedited Process 12-month	100%	98.98%	100%	99.74%	98.71%	-1.03

The largest decrease in efficiency was in the intergovernmental category with a 3.45% decline. The global pandemic declared by the World Health Organization in March of 2020 extended through the 2021 review period. Staff continued working remotely and balanced their own family needs with the important work the program performs. Even with the decline in intergovernmental efficiency, the program performed above the 75% federal benchmark. Figure 5 below illustrates the changes in Intergovernmental efficiency over the last seven years.

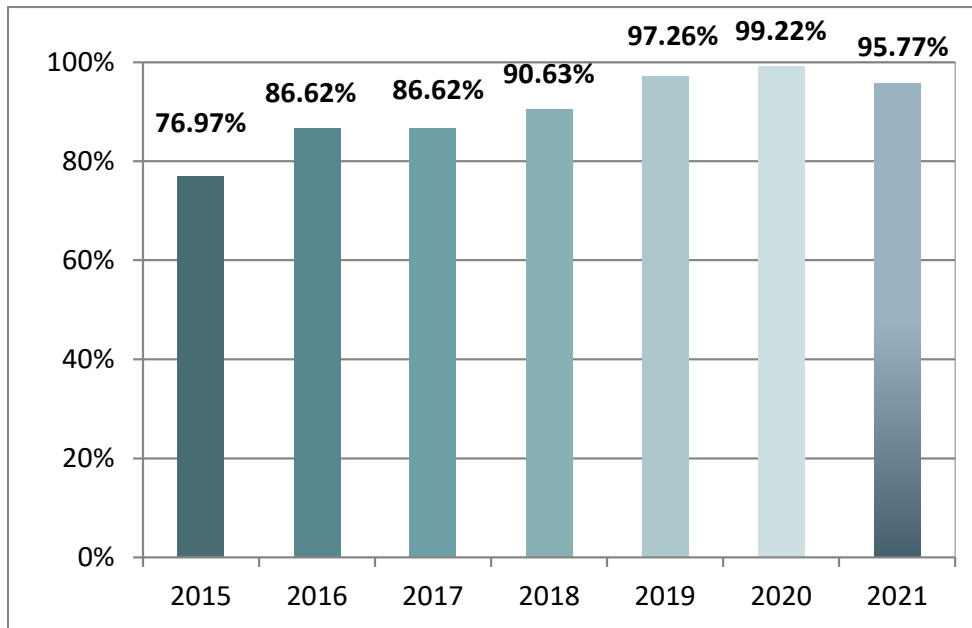


Figure 5 — Intergovernmental Efficiency Rate: 2015-2021

During FFY 2021, Oregon did not experience significant rate increases in any review category. All increases in performance remained below a 1% overall change. The stabilization of efficiency for Oregon is a by-product of Origin and is expected to continue.

IV. Conclusion

Oregon surpassed the required federal compliance benchmarks in all the program areas, including the 6-month benchmark for Expedited Process. Despite a full year of global pandemic, staff dedication supported by technology helped Oregon maintain the high level of service seen during prior years.

V. The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average four hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information.

VI. Attachments

A. Appendix 1 - Tables and Figures

- File size:
- Uploaded on: