



Oregon Department of Justice

Oregon Child Support Program

Supporting Parents to Support Children



Case Data Report for the Child Support Guidelines Project

Version 0.1

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REVISION HISTORY

Author	Date	Reason for Changes	Version
Annie Engel Luciana Fontanini Amy Croucher	12/18/2024	First Draft	0.1

INTRODUCTION

The Oregon Child Support Program is responsible for enacting the formula used for calculating all child support obligations in the state (whether judicial or administrative). The formula must be reviewed regularly to ensure it results in fair and equitable support awards for Oregon families. [\[ORS 25.270 and 25.275\]](#)

Oregon, just like every state that operates a federally funded child support program under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, must also comply with federal laws governing the creation and maintenance of the state's child support calculation formula. When reviewing the formula for calculating child support, states must consider economic data on the cost of raising children, the labor market, and the impact of their guidelines on families living below the federal poverty level. In addition, states must analyze case data to understand the real-world application of their formula. Lastly, states are required to provide meaningful opportunity for public input. [\[45 CFR 302.56\(h\)\]](#)

When reviewing and updating Oregon's formula, the Oregon Child Support Program convenes a Guidelines Advisory Committee to ensure that the various stakeholders, including members of the public who will pay or receive child support, have an opportunity to provide meaningful input on Oregon's guidelines. This committee's recommendations will be informed by economic data, the labor market, case data, and public input consistent with federal regulations. Oregon's Guidelines Advisory Committee convened in 2024 to assess Oregon's guidelines and consider necessary or beneficial changes.

This report memorializes the findings of the Oregon Child Support Program's 2024 analysis of case data pursuant to [45 CFR 302.56\(h\)\(2\)](#). The report may be used to inform decision-making by the Guidelines Advisory Committee. To produce this report, the program elected to analyze a sample of cases with orders entered between July 2023 and June 2024. The sample of 367 cases were drawn from a pool of approximately 8,000, with roughly half of the orders being issued by child support offices. This sample size was selected to provide a 95% confidence rate in the findings. The following pages will highlight some trends in the information gathered.

At minimum, federal regulations require consideration of the following case data:

- ✓ The rate of default orders (as opposed to orders resulting from a hearing, or agreement by the parties)
- ✓ The rate at which the self-support reserve impacted the obligations [\[OAR 137-050-0745\]](#)
- ✓ The rate at which rebuttals impacted the obligations [\[OAR 137-050-0760\]](#)
- ✓ The rate at which income was imputed (support was calculated based on income the parent doesn't actually earn)
- ✓ The rate of compliance (payments) in each of these areas

In addition, the program elected to consider several more aspects of the sample cases. Information was gathered regarding participants' location, family violence history, and incarceration history. Information was also gathered regarding the number of children involved (both joint and non-joint), and the rate of parenting time being exercised. Health care coverage provisions and court ordered amounts were also tracked.

Case information was gathered both systemically and manually, with some information being pulled from child support program cases, and some information identified and recorded by

program employees familiar with reviewing cases and reading child support orders. The information was primarily found in Origin, the program’s automated case management system, but information was also found in OJCIN, the Oregon Judicial Department’s Online Register of Actions.

The following sections present highlights in the case information and offer some basic insights on the results. Each section provides a brief explanation of its purpose, key results from the data, and graphs or charts when helpful. There is a brief conclusion with summary observations.

REPORT WRITING TEAM

Role	Name
Policy Analyst	Luciana Fontanini
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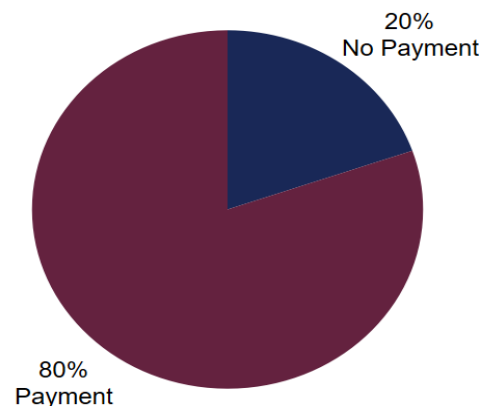
SECTION ONE: REQUIRED ANALYSIS

As noted in the introduction, there are several data points that states are required to consider when reviewing their guidelines. This section provides information the Guidelines Advisory Committee is required to consider, including general compliance data in each area. There is additional analysis on these points in separate sections, through different lenses.

Compliance (Overall)

To draw conclusions about how various aspects of the guidelines affect compliance with orders, it's important to know what the overall rate of compliance for the cases reviewed. The cases reviewed all had an order entered between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, and payments were evaluated through August 30, 2024. Figure 1 reflects the percentage of cases in the sample that received at least one payment after the order was entered. Of the 367 cases reviewed, 80% received payments within the review period after the order was entered. Additional analysis of compliance rates will be included throughout this report.

Compliance After Final Order



Rate of Default

Figure 2 reflects the percentage of orders in the sample that were entered by default. Orders are entered by default when no hearing is held in the time allowed, and the parties do not choose to sign consents or stipulate to the final support obligation. Orders may be entered by default because one or both parties do not engage in the process, or when they are content with the proposed order. More than half of the orders reviewed, 60%, were entered by default.

That said, there is some variation in the rate of default orders when considering legal actions initiated by the Oregon Child Support Program versus the courts. We will provide additional analysis in a separate section of this report. Of the orders entered by default, there was a 76% compliance rate, which is lower than the overall compliance rate for the sample.

FIGURE 1

Rate of Default

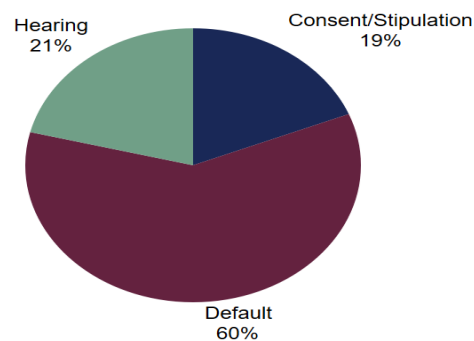


FIGURE 2

Self-Support Reserve

Figure 3 and Figure 4 reflect the percentage of calculations in which the self-support reserve affected the final obligation and the correlation between the self-support reserve and compliance with the order.

What is the self-support reserve? Oregon's guidelines include a low-income adjustment called a self-support reserve. It is described in [OAR 137-050-0745](#). Oregon's self-support reserve is intended to help ensure that a parent who owes support is left with enough income to meet their own basic needs. The self-support reserve is derived from the federal poverty guideline and is updated annually. During the review period, the self-support reserve was \$1,418.

Self Support Reserve Impact

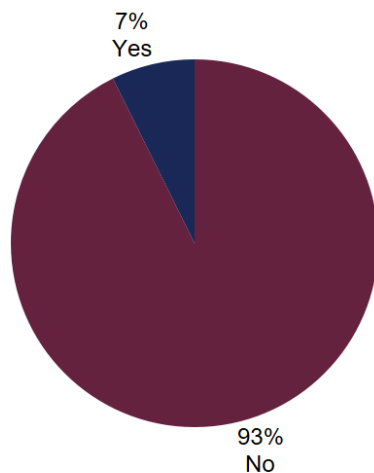


FIGURE 3

Compliance Rate for the Self Support Reserve

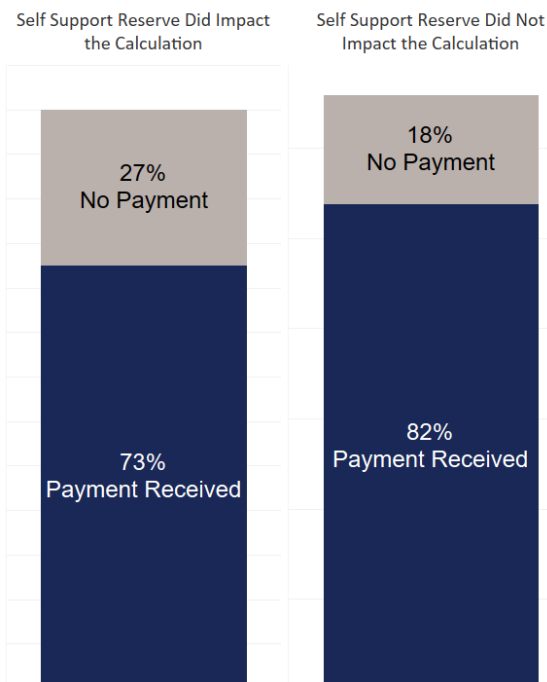


FIGURE 4

Figure 3 reflects only 7% of the calculations in the sample were impacted by the self-support reserve. The left bar in Figure 4 reflects of the cases where the self-support reserve affected the calculation, 73% received a payment after the order was entered – this is lower than the overall rate of compliance. The right bar in Figure 4 reflects of the cases where the self-support reserve did not impact the calculation, 82% received a payment – this is slightly higher than the overall rate of compliance.

Rebuttals

Only seven calculations in the sample include a rebuttal to the guidelines. This is not a big enough sample size to draw firm conclusions. However, there was a 100% compliance rate on

cases where a rebuttal was used in the calculation; all seven cases received payments after the order was entered.

The small number of rebuttals could be interpreted in a few ways. It could suggest that Oregon's guidelines are already fair and appropriate, and that they already adequately address the needs of Oregon parents. It could also suggest that parents and professionals using the guidelines are not comfortable using rebuttals and rely on other means to deviate from the guidelines. Other means might include omitting a calculation entirely, consenting to a different amount, or manipulating the numbers entered in the calculation to result in a desired support obligation. However, the 100% rate of compliance on obligations that included a rebuttal suggests that the few rebuttals used produced appropriate orders for these families.

Use of Minimum Wage (Imputed Income)

As already noted, [45 CFR 302.56](#) requires child support programs to assess the rate at which income is imputed under their guidelines and consider the rate of compliance on cases where income was imputed. In plain language, "imputed income" is "potential income" under Oregon's guidelines (see [OAR 137-050-0715\(3\)](#)). Federal regulation requires every parent's specific circumstances to be considered when imputing income for a guideline child support calculation. Oregon's definition of potential income is generally consistent with the federal rule, but there are two guideline provisions which may benefit from further consideration. Oregon's guidelines permit income to be alleged at the lowest minimum wage in the state where a parent lives when there is insufficient information to determine their actual or potential income ([OAR 137-050-0715\(7\)](#)), and require it when the parent receives TANF ([OAR 137-050-0715\(10\)](#)).

The Guidelines Advisory Committee will be asked to evaluate whether these provisions meet the needs of Oregon families and whether they are still appropriate when considering the requirements laid out in [45 CFR 302.56\(c\)\(1\)\(iii\)](#). Therefore, this report chose to focus on parents who were alleged to earn minimum wage with no other supporting information. Acknowledging that this is different than considering all imputed income, we believe consideration of "potential" minimum wage is more relevant to the work of the committee.

Percentage of Cases With 'Potential Minimum Wage'

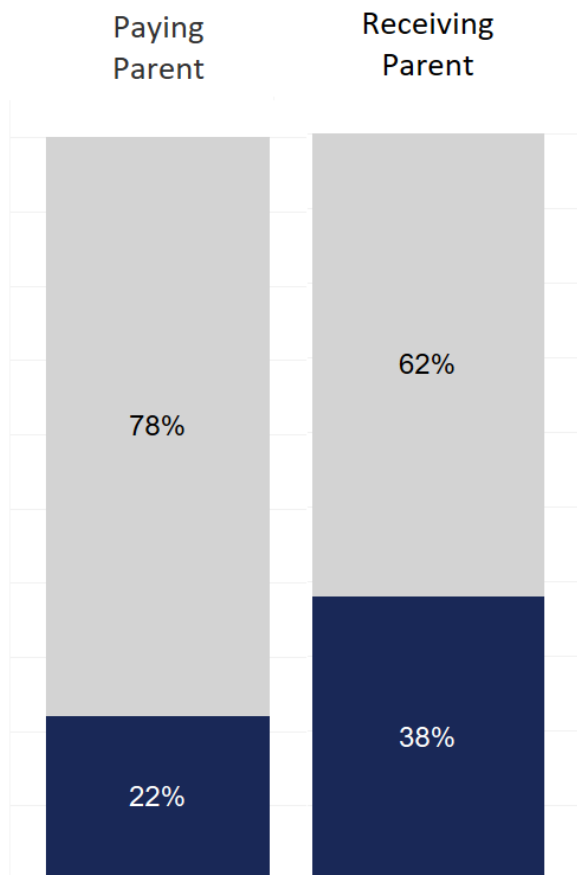


Figure 5 shows that, overall, 22% of paying parents were alleged to earn minimum wage with no facts to support the claim, and 38% percent of parents who receive support were alleged to earn minimum wage. It is unsurprising that more parents who receive support were alleged to earn minimum wage, considering that many new orders established by the Oregon Child Support Program are initiated on behalf of parents who have just begun receiving TANF. Additional analysis on the use of minimum wage in the absence of other information is provided throughout this report.

Of the paying parents who were alleged to earn minimum wage with no supporting information, only 56% made payments during the review period. Considering the overall compliance rate for the sample was 80%, this suggests that attributing a paying parent with minimum wage earnings absent supporting information may be less likely to produce enforceable orders.

FIGURE 5

SECTION TWO: ANALYSIS BY PREPARER

Instinctively, many child support professionals likely suspect that obligations obtained through the Oregon Child Support Program will reflect different trends than obligations obtained directly in the courts. This section considers several of the data points already discussed through the lens of who prepared the obligation. Did the case begin in the courts? Or did it come out of the program?

Obligations prepared by the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) were categorized as “program” calculations. This was done for a few reasons. Primarily, child support orders prepared by OAH always originate through the Oregon Child Support Program. These families are receiving child support services and the initial information underlying the order was prepared by program staff. Additionally, only 6% of the sample calculations were prepared by OAH.

Therefore, this section considers trends in orders originating through the courts (prepared by self-represented litigants, attorney-represented litigants, or after a hearing with a circuit court judge) against orders originating through the Oregon Child Support Program (Division of Child

Support offices, District Attorney offices, and OAH). Overall, 59% of the calculations were categorized as program calculations and 41% were categorized as court calculations.

Compliance by Preparer

Among orders prepared by the program, 81% received a payment after it was entered. Similarly, 80% of orders prepared through the courts received a payment after being entered. This suggests that overall rate of compliance is not affected by who prepared the child support calculation.

Default Rate by Preparer

The rate of default between the courts and the program were very different. Only 20% of the orders prepared by the courts were entered by default while 87% of orders prepared by the program were entered by default. The variation between the two groups may have to do with how the case was initiated. Court cases are initiated by one or more interested parties who are proactively seeking a support obligation. Program cases are often mandated by federal law, initiated as the result of a parent enrolling their children in TANF (approximately 66% of the program calculations originated out of TANF referrals). While by no means universal, many TANF recipients are not proactively seeking child support services. Additionally, when one parent needs public assistance, the other parent may also be facing difficult financial circumstances. Participants experiencing financial difficulties may be less likely to engage with the child support process due to more immediate priorities.

Self-Support Reserve by Preparer

Instances of the self-support reserve impacting the calculation were also very different between court and program prepared calculations. Of the calculations affected by the self-support reserve, 77% were prepared by the program and 23% were prepared through the courts. Again, this trend may be influenced by the larger percentage of cases originating out of TANF referrals.

However, of the cases that were not impacted by the self-support reserve, 59% were prepared by the program, and 41% were prepared by the court. This is consistent with the larger split between court and program prepared calculations.

Use of Rebuttals by Preparer

As already noted, with only seven cases including rebuttals, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions. However, rebuttals were split between program and court prepared calculations, and relatively consistent with the overall divide, with 56% of the rebuttals used in program calculations and 44% in calculations originating through the court system. This suggests that the use of rebuttals was not affected by who prepared the support calculation.

Use of Minimum Wage by Preparer

Figure 6 shows that the use of minimum wage in the absence of any supporting information was more prevalent among program calculations. A quarter of paying parents and nearly half of the receiving parents in program calculations were attributed with minimum wage in the absence of supporting information. Figure 6 reflects however, through the courts, only 17% of paying parents and 26% of parents receiving support were attributed with minimum wage in the absence of supporting information.

As already noted, the rate at which the program alleged that parents who receive support earned minimum wage is partially due to the requirement to assess parents receiving TANF with this income and the relatively high percentage of cases originating from TANF referrals. It is less clear why the rate of paying parents attributed with minimum wage in the absence of information is higher within the program. As with the rate of default between the two groups, it's possible that parents receiving services from the child support program are less likely to engage with the process

because child support services are being provided by law, not because one or both parties actively sought a child support order.

Percentage of Cases With 'Potential Minimum Wage' By Preparer

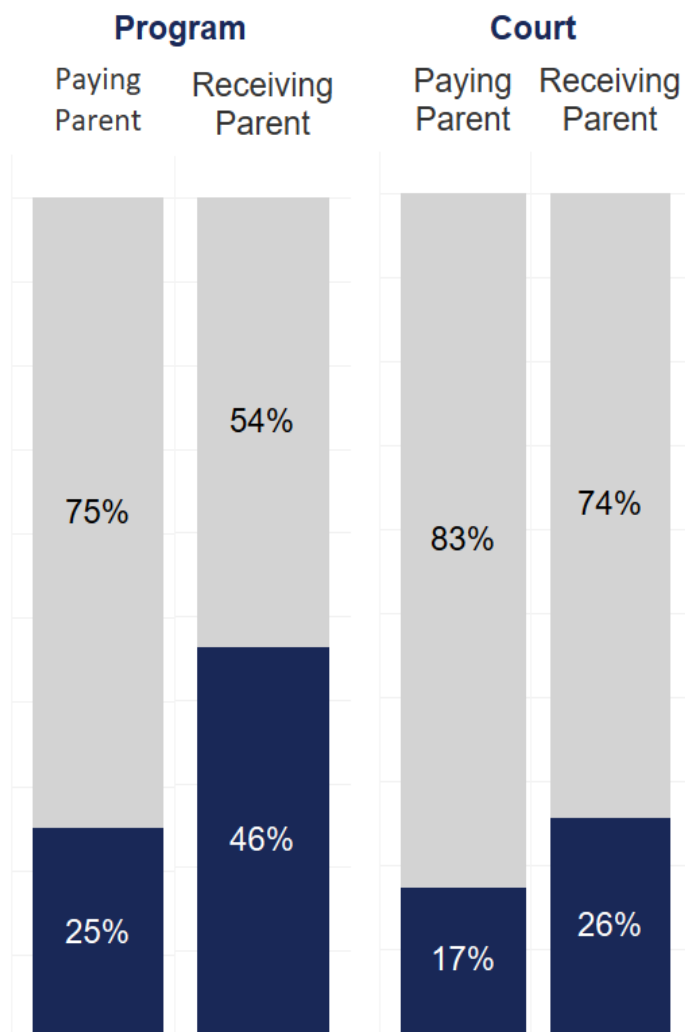


FIGURE 6

There tends to be a perception that urban and rural populations operate differently, and there was a conscious effort to include both urban and rural perspectives when developing the Guidelines Advisory Committee membership. Therefore, the sample case data was evaluated through the lens of where parents live. However, it should be noted that this is an imperfect data point – the sample captures where parents are living today, not where they were living when the order was entered. That said, analysis of the sample cases suggests that the guidelines are applied similarly, and garner similar results, in urban and rural areas.

While people live in zip codes, they also live in counties – and court orders are ultimately filed in county courts. Oregon counties are also assigned rural and urban designations (see [Oregon Counties: State of Oregon](#)). When considered at the county level, 89% of the orders in the sample were filed in urban counties, and the remaining 11% were filed in rural counties. See Figure 7.



Compliance by Location

Paying parents who live in rural zip codes were found to comply with their orders at nearly the same rate as paying parents living in urban zip codes. The compliance rate for paying parents in urban zip codes was 79% and the compliance rate for paying parents in rural zip codes was 83%. These rates are relatively consistent with one another, though slightly better in rural zip codes, suggesting location of the paying parent does not greatly affect their compliance with their order.

Default Rate by Location

While the rate of compliance was relatively consistent in urban versus rural zip codes, there was more of disparity in the rate of default between paying parents who live in urban versus rural zip codes. The overall rate of default orders for the sample was 60%. Within the total default orders, 57% involved a paying parent in an urban zip code and 43% involved a paying parent in a rural zip code. Looking further into subgroups, paying parents who live in an urban zip code had a 65% rate of default orders. In comparison, the group of paying parents who live in a rural zip code had a 56% rate of default orders. The lower rate of default orders for paying parents in rural zip codes, considered against the lower compliance rate for default orders overall, may be affecting the slightly higher compliance rate for parents in rural zip codes.

Self-Support Reserve by Location

As already reported, only 7% of the sample calculations were impacted by the self-support reserve. However, paying parents who live in urban zip codes were slightly overrepresented, with 8% of this group being impacted by the self-support reserve, while only 6% of parents in rural counties were impacted. Looking at it from another angle, among the 7% of calculations impacted by the self-support reserve, 65% were for paying parents living in urban zip codes and the remaining 35% lived in rural zip codes.

Use of Rebuttals by Location

All rebuttals within the sample were applied on cases where the paying parent lives in an urban zip code. With only seven cases to consider, it is difficult to know how to interpret this finding.

Use of Minimum Wage by Location

As with compliance, the rate at which the lowest minimum wage was imputed for paying parents is consistent between those living in rural versus urban zip codes. Of the parents living in urban zip codes, 22% were alleged to earn minimum wage with no supporting information. Similarly, 21% living in rural zip codes were alleged to earn minimum wage with no supporting information. This suggests that location of the paying parent is not impacting the fact-finder's decision to impute earnings at the lowest minimum wage in the state where a parent lives.

SECTION FOUR: ADDITIONAL COMPLIANCE INFORMATION

While it's not reasonable to rely on a single indicator to determine whether Oregon's guidelines are producing fair and equitable orders, the rate of compliance is a strong indicator of whether the current guidelines are producing enforceable orders. At minimum, examining the compliance rate among several additional groups and comparing them to the overall rate of compliance in the sample may point to factors that need further consideration. As already discussed in multiple sections, the overall rate of compliance within the sample was 80%. There is a lot of information to consider in this section so please read the following explanation of the graphs carefully.

Tips for Interpreting Graphs

The graphs in this section will all be read in the same way. Each one compares a different variable with compliance rates and the number of cases affected.

To identify the variable, look at what is listed on the lefthand side. For example: parenting time. The percentages next to the horizontal bars are comparing the compliance rate *within* each subgroup. For example: The zero-parenting time group had a 73% compliance rate and a 27% non-compliance rate. The 1-10 hours parenting time group had a 92% compliance rate and an 8% non-compliance rate.

The size of the horizontal bars throughout the graph represents the number of cases in that group and not a higher percentage of compliance. In the example of parenting time versus compliance rate, the 'yes' compliance horizontal bar for 50% parenting time is smaller than the zero-parenting time 'yes' compliance bar. Although the 50% parenting time bar is *smaller*, there is a *larger* compliance rate. The size of the horizontal bar represents that there are only 21 cases in that group, compared to the larger zero parenting time bar that has 152 cases.

Compliance and Parenting Time

The Guidelines Advisory Committee will consider whether changes to the guideline rule on parenting time ([OAR 137-050-0730](#)) are necessary or beneficial. To assist the committee, Figure 8 shows the rate of compliance through the lens of the paying parents' parenting time percentage. Cases where the paying parents had no parenting time were separated into their own group. Cases where the paying parent had some parenting time, not to exceed 50%, were separated in 10% increments of parenting time. There were no cases in the sample where the paying parent had between 41%-49% parenting time. Cases where the parents shared equal parenting time were assessed as their own group because there are unique considerations under the guidelines when parents share equal parenting time. And, lastly, cases where the paying parent had more parenting time than the parent who received support were also evaluated separately. There were very few parents in this last group, but they all made payments after their orders were entered (100% compliance).

Parents with any amount of parenting time were more likely to comply with their order. While only 73% of parents with no parenting time made payments during the review period after their order was entered, cases where the paying parent had some parenting time consistently showed a higher compliance rate than the overall sample (ranging from 85%-100%

compliance). That said, a substantial number of cases in the sample did not include any parenting time for the parent who pays support (41%).

Parenting Time and Compliance Rate

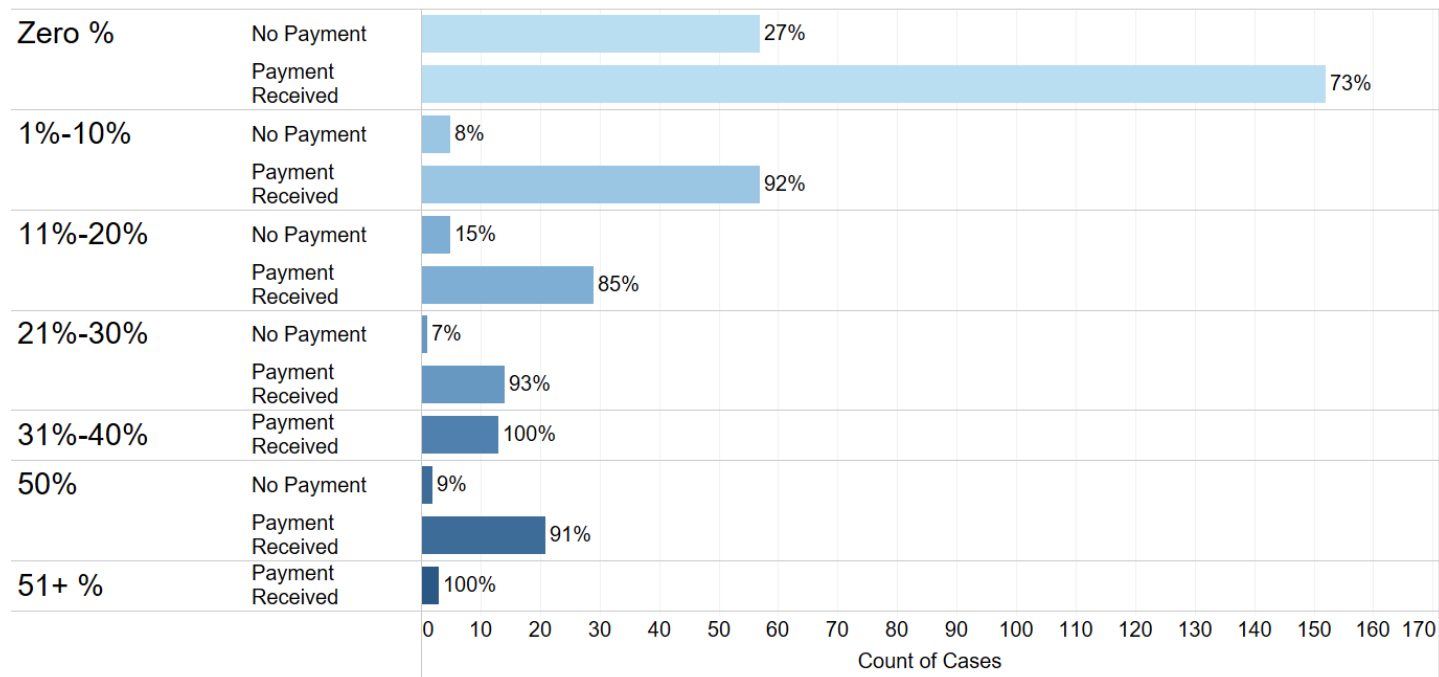


FIGURE 8

Compliance and Number of Joint Children

Figure 9 reflects most cases in the sample had either one or two joint children included in the order. A small number of cases had three, four, or five children included, and none had more. The compliance rate for the cases in each group was consistent with the others, and consistent with the overall compliance rate in the sample. The number of children does not appear to have a major impact on the paying parent's compliance with the order.

Total Joint Children and Compliance Rate

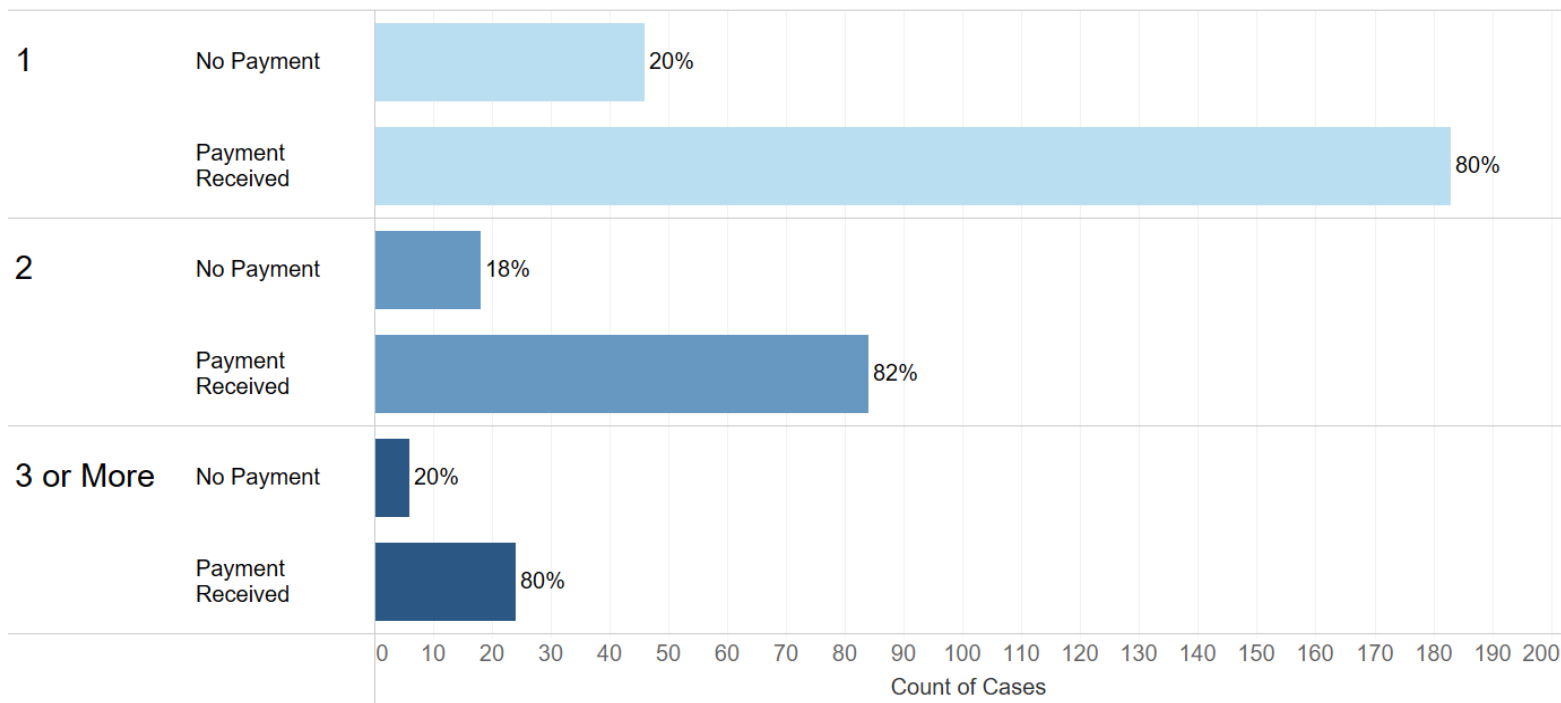


FIGURE 9

Compliance and Paying Parent Income

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Figure 10 reflects when considering compliance by the paying parent's income, there is poorer compliance at lower income levels, and better compliance at higher income levels. Among paying parents earning more than \$5,000 per month, there was a 90%+ compliance rate. Among parents earning more than the lowest Oregon minimum wage up to \$5,000 per month, compliance was still higher than the overall sample – above 80%. Compliance drops drastically for parents with income at the lowest minimum wage or less. For parents whose income was assessed above the self-support reserve (\$1,419) up to the lowest minimum wage there was a 63% compliance rate and for parents earning the self-support reserve or less there was a 58% compliance rate. This graph suggests that parents will generally pay support if they have ability to do so.

Paying Parent Income Groups and Compliance Rate

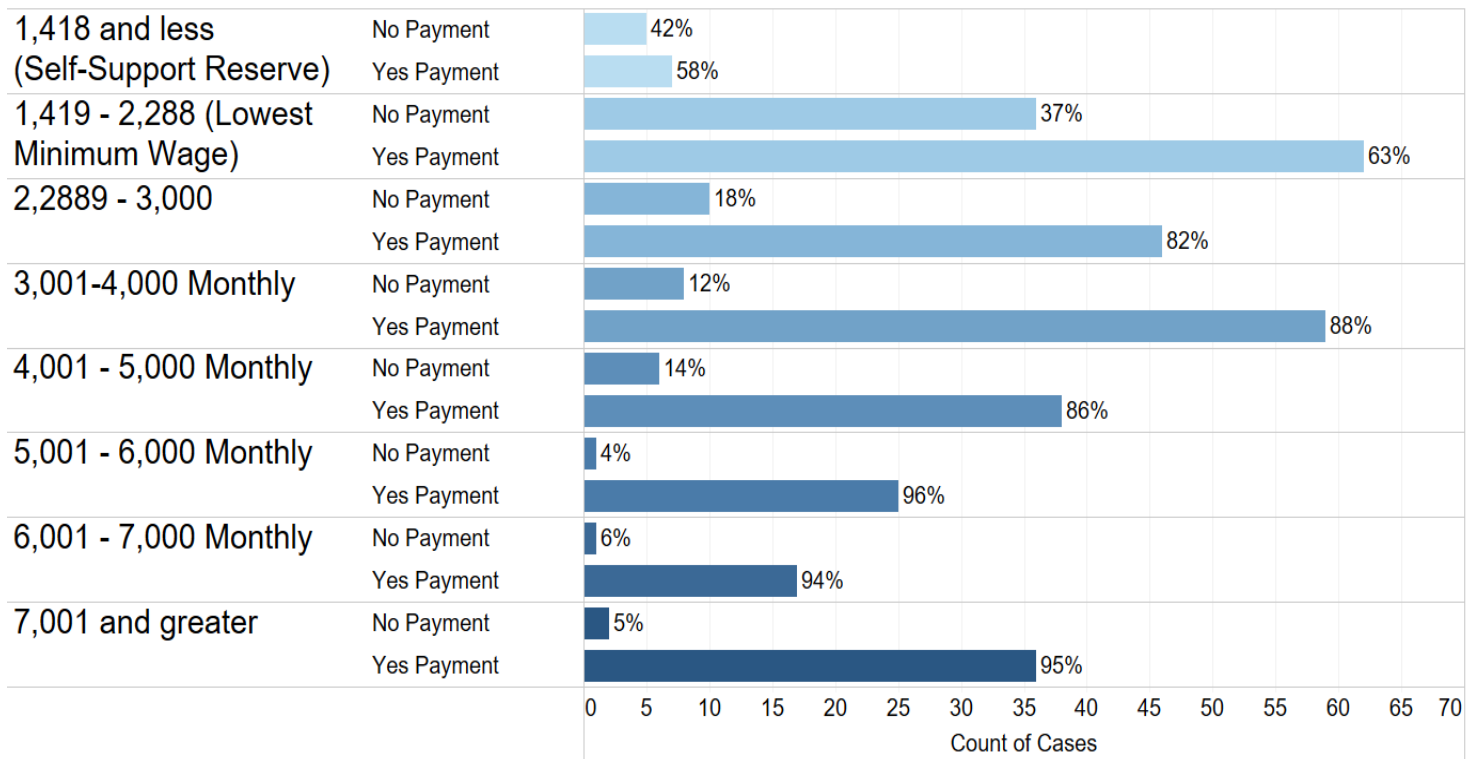


FIGURE 10

Compliance and Court Ordered Amounts

Figure 11 reflects when considering compliance by the monthly court ordered amount, compliance fluctuated between groups. It is difficult to determine whether the cases should be grouped differently, or whether alternative information should be included. The largest group of cases included court orders between \$300 and \$600 per month. In this group, compliance was below the rate of the overall sample (ranging from 73% to 78%). Similarly, orders at \$100 per month or less had a 77% compliance rate and orders from \$800 to \$1,100 per month had 75% to 77% compliance rates. Compliance was above that of the overall sample for orders above \$100 but below \$300, and for orders between \$600 and \$800. It was also generally higher for court ordered amounts above \$1,300 per month, but there are fewer orders at these higher amounts. To make this information meaningful, it may be helpful to include additional reference points or approach the analysis differently.

Court Order Amount and Compliance Rate

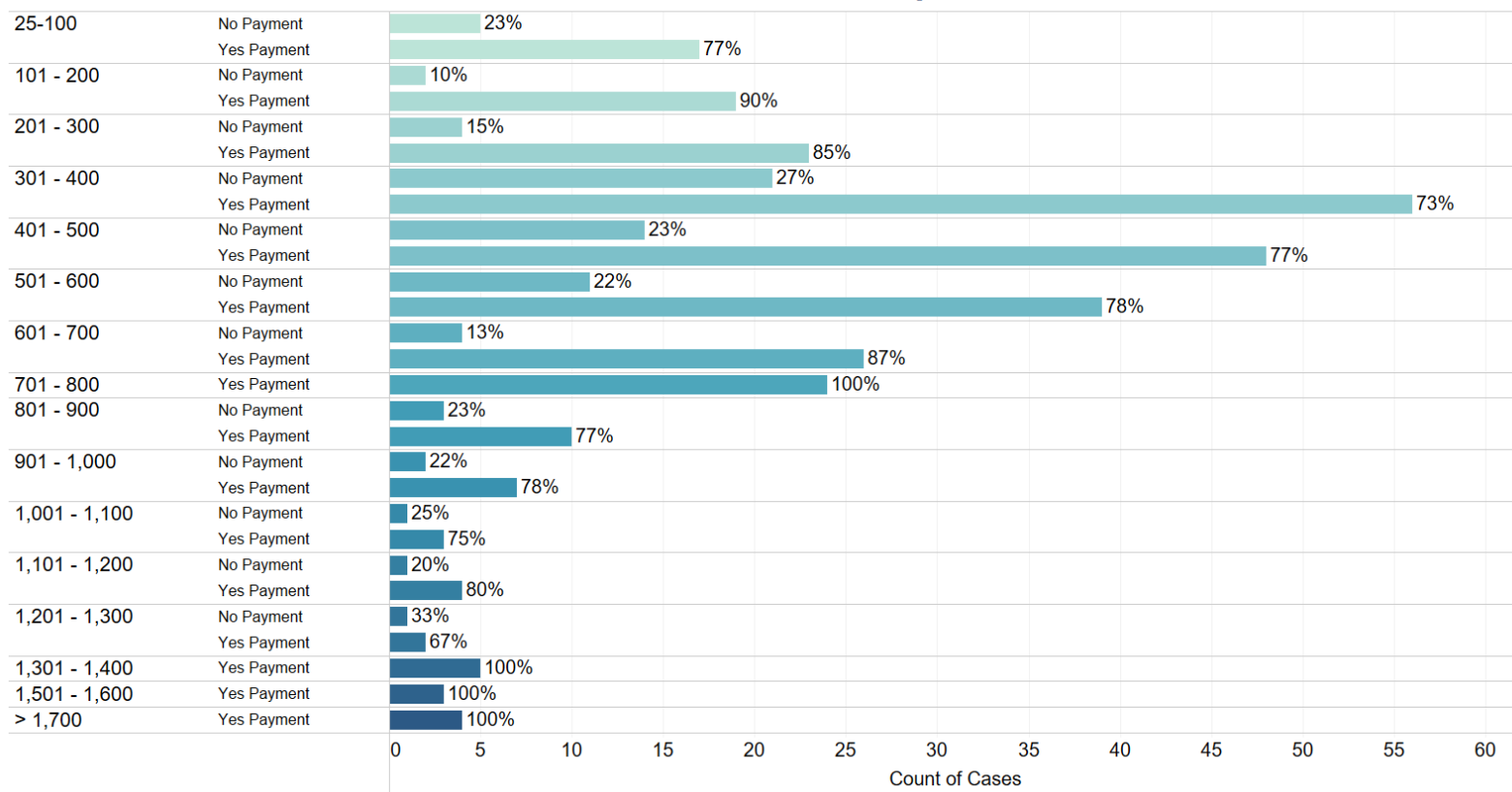


FIGURE 11

Compliance in New Orders versus Modifications

Each order in the sample was either a new order or a modification of an existing order. The sample contained a nearly even split between them, with 51% of the cases having a new order entered and 49% having a modification. Among new orders, there was a 73% compliance rate after the order was entered. Modifications, on the other hand, reflected very positive trends in compliance.

Among sample cases where a modification was entered during the review period there was a 75% compliance rate prior to entry of the modification but compliance jumped up to 88% after entry of the modification. Considering that both new orders and modifications rely on the same guidelines, it may be beneficial to examine additional data points on modifications to better understand this positive trend. For instance, is there a significant disparity in the rate of default between new orders and modifications? Orders that originated from dissolution (divorce) cases also had a higher compliance rate than the general sample at 87%.

Compliance and Family Violence Indicators

The data set captured whether there was a family violence indicator associated to the cases in the sample. A family violence indicator is added to the case when a participant files a Claim of Risk and receives an Order for Non-Disclosure or when a case participant is enrolled in the [Address Confidentiality Program](#) through the Oregon Department of Justice, Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division. Of the 367 cases reviewed, there were 30 that included a family violence indicator (8%). Reviewers noted whether the family violence indicator was added for the parent who receives support and children, for the paying parent, for a child attending school, or by all participants separately. No cases had a family violence indicator for a child attending school or for the whole family. Of the cases with a family violence indicator, 90% were for parents who receive support and children in their home, and 10% were for parents who pay support.

For those 30 cases, there was a 77% compliance rate, which was slightly below the sample's overall compliance rate. Among cases where the parent who receives support requested the family violence indicator, there was a 74% compliance rate (still lower than the overall sample). However, there was a 100% compliance rate on cases where the paying parent requested the family violence indicator. It may be valuable to gather and more deeply examine information about cases with family violence indicators.

SECTION FIVE: HEALTH CARE COVERAGE

The guideline rule on health care coverage ([OAR 137-050-0750](#)) currently prioritizes private health care coverage above public coverage, and determines whether a parent is ordered to provide coverage based on their income and the availability and cost of private coverage. Private health care coverage is considered affordable when the monthly premium cost is less than 4% of the combined adjusted gross incomes of the parents. However, if a parent's income is less than the highest minimum wage in Oregon, they cannot be asked to provide coverage unless it is free. The Guidelines Advisory Committee will be asked to consider whether to continue prioritizing private coverage and the formula for assessing affordable coverage.

Health Care Coverage (Overall)

It was not always possible to determine the availability of health care coverage based on the information found in the order being assessed. For orders issued by the Oregon Child Support Program, some assumptions can be made about whether coverage was available at the time support was calculated – the language of the order makes it clear whether a parent *presently* had coverage at the time of the calculation. For calculations originating through the courts, it was not always clear whether a parent was being ordered to provide because they presently had coverage, or whether they were simply being ordered to provide if it became available.

Based on information in the calculations and language found in orders, it appears that approximately 63% of the families in the sample did not have private health care coverage available at the time support was calculated. In 17% of the cases the parent receiving support (only) was ordered to provide presently available coverage and in 13% of the cases the parent paying support (only) was ordered to provide presently available coverage. Lastly, in 6% of the cases, both parents were ordered to provide coverage at the same time.

Health Care Coverage and Income

The following graph looks at trends in health care coverage terms based on the combined income of the parents. This is an imperfect look at the interplay of income and health care coverage in the sample for several reasons. For one, sample data recorded gross income, but health care coverage terms are based on adjusted gross income. Additionally, to make the graph easier to read, the parents' incomes were combined. This makes it difficult to see which parents were above and below the highest minimum wage in the state where they live. This is another area where it may be beneficial to gather additional data and conduct further analysis.

On the most lefthand side of the graph are combined income groups and health care coverage types. The graph shows the income groups and how health care coverage is disbursed within these income groups. The size of the horizontal bars reflects the percentage of cases within that specific group.

Figure 12 shows the same trends between each income group, except for the combined parental income group of \$11,001 and greater. The following statements apply to all groups except for the final income group of \$11,001 and greater. For most income groups, the majority of families did not have private health care coverage available. The next most common coverage type in these groups was for the receiving parent to provide. The least common

occurrence was double coverage. Within the income group of \$11,001 and greater income group, the majority coverage is the receiving parent providing, followed by the paying parent providing and the least common is no health care coverage available.

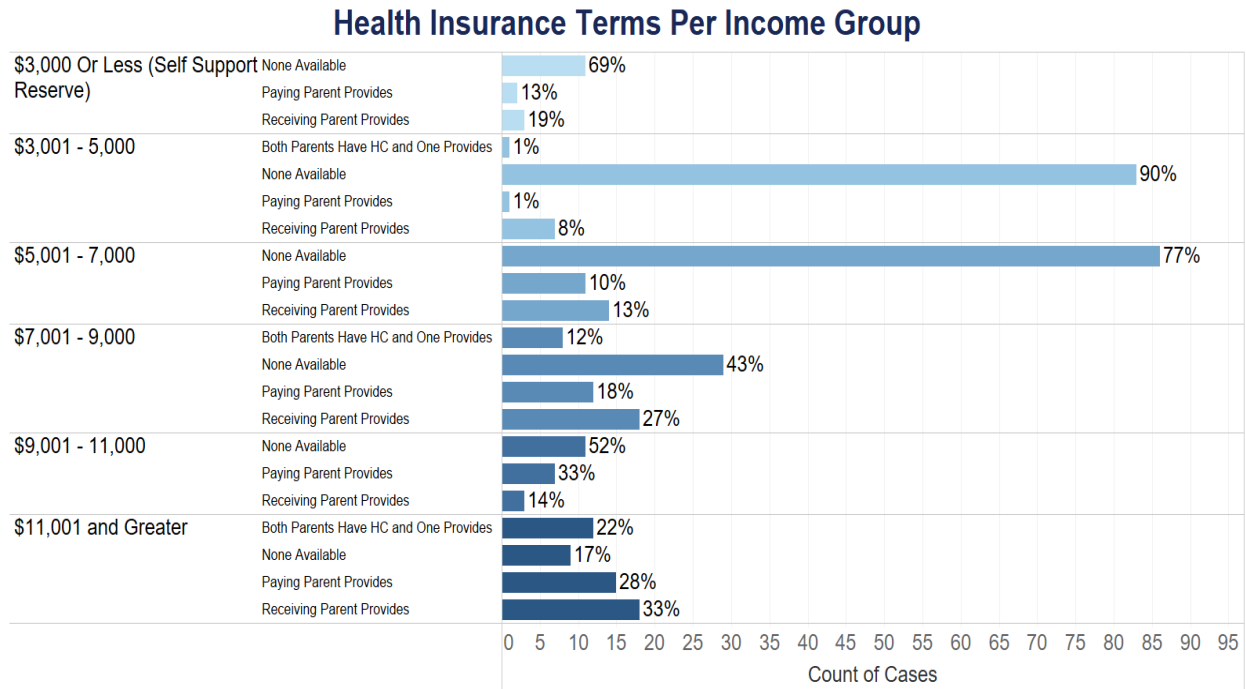


FIGURE 4

SECTION SIX: CONCLUSIONS

Stepping back to consider the consistencies and inconsistencies in the sample, a few trends can be observed. Overall, compliance was consistent between program and court calculations, and between paying parents in urban and rural zip codes. Rebuttals were used consistently between the types of preparers as well. However, rebuttals were exclusively used on cases where the paying parent lived in an urban zip code. The rate of default orders, the instances of the self-support reserve impacting calculations, and the use of minimum wage for income in the absence of other information were all notably higher among orders originating from the Oregon Child Support Program.

Compliance on default orders was lower (76%) than the overall compliance rate in the sample (80%). Compliance was also lower for cases impacted by the self-support reserve (73%). The poorest compliance was found on cases where the paying parent was alleged to earn minimum wage in the absence of supporting information (56%).

Orders originating out of the Oregon Child Support Program were more likely to be entered by default, more likely to be impacted by the self-support reserve, and more likely to include a paying parent alleged to earn minimum wage in the absence of other information. Yet, despite this convergence of factors associated to poorer compliance for parents whose orders originated through the Oregon Child Support Program, the overall rate of compliance was consistent between court prepared and program prepared orders. This may not reflect anything about the orders or the guidelines. It could be related to the fact that all the orders were being enforced by the Oregon Child Support Program, regardless of where they originated.

Turning toward positive trends, compliance consistently increased as the paying parent's income increased. While this may not be shocking information, it was valuable to see clear and consistent data to support anecdotal assumptions. Compliance also increased in cases where the paying parent has a parenting time credit, suggesting that parenting time may be correlated with increased financial support. Lastly, there was a significant jump in compliance after modifications were entered (75% compliance prior increased to 88% compliance after). This last result warrants more research considering that both new orders and modifications rely on the same guidelines – what is prompting the marked change?

Gaps in the data and limitations of the sample were noted in several sections. It may be beneficial to use statistical testing to increase the impact and complexity of our analysis. Tableau was used to visually present the information collected and identify high-level trends but future further analysis with statistical testing can be used to provide inferential statistics and hypothesis testing. With this, additional conclusions and predictions about our sample can be made, the magnitude of specific variables can be determined, and the accuracy of new guideline models can be assessed. All of this will create stronger support towards guidelines decision making in the future.

SECTION SEVEN: GLOSSARY

- **Case** – The Oregon Child Support Program’s record for an individual family, identified with a unique, 15-digit case number.
- **Case Data** – Information contained a child support program case, including document images, records of legal actions, participant demographics, payment records, and more.
- **Compliance** – As used in this report, a parent was in compliance with their order if they made at least one payment during the review period, after the order was entered.
- **Court Ordered Amount** – The recurring, monthly amount of child support required by a court order.
- **Family Violence Indicator** – A flag on individual case records, indicating that one or more case participants requires extra precautions to protect their personal information.
- **Federal Poverty Level** – A measure of income issued every year by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). See: [Poverty Guidelines | ASPE](#).
- **Income Terms** (See [OAR 137-050-0715](#)):
 - **Actual Income** – A parent’s known, quantifiable earnings.
 - **Imputed Income** – A federal term used to describe income that a parent is able to earn, but they may not actually earn at this time.
 - **Potential Income** – A term used in Oregon’s guidelines to describe income a parent is able to earn, but they may not actually earn at this time. Substantially similar to “imputed income.”
 - **Potential Minimum Wage** – As used in this report, this is the lowest minimum wage in the state where a parent lives, used pursuant to OAR 137-050-0715(7) and (10). For the cases in the sample, the lowest minimum wage in Oregon was \$2,288 per month.
- **Joint Children** – Children for whom support is being calculated, and for whom the parties to the order are jointly responsible.
- **Non-Joint Children** – Children for whom one party to the order is responsible, but not the other. Support is not ordered for non-joint children, but a parent’s number of non-joint children will impact a child support calculation.
- **Order Terms:**
 - **New Order** – An order within the case data that establishes a new child support obligation for a family (not a modification of an existing child support obligation).
 - **Modification** – An order that changes an existing child support obligation.
 - **Default Order** – A child support order that was entered without either an objection or consent from the parties.
- **Origin** – The Oregon Child Support Program’s automated case management system.
- **Preparer** – As used in this report, this identifies to the person or entity who determined which facts should be used in the calculation (the “fact-finder”). Preparers were divided into two groups:
 - Program - consisting of orders prepared by DOJ, Division of Child Support offices, county District Attorney offices, or the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH).
 - Court – consisting of orders prepared by self-represented parties, represented parties, or after a hearing with a circuit court judge.
- **Rebuttals** – A deviation from the child support guidelines. A rebuttal should be used when the guidelines do not produce a fair and equitable order due to a family’s unique circumstances. See [OAR 137-050-0760](#).
- **Self-Support Reserve** – This is an income threshold set under Oregon’s child support guidelines that is intended to protect a paying parent’s ability to support themselves. At the time the orders subject to this report were calculated, the self-support reserve was \$1,418. See [OAR 137-050-0745](#).
- **Title IV-D** – This refers to [section IV-D of the Social Security Act](#), which established the federal child support program. These are the federal laws governing all state-run child support programs.