



NYC's Child Support Program Receives State Performance Award

New York, NY — More New York City children now have the vital assistance of regular Child Support payments thanks to HRA's Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), which collected over \$742 million in support payments in 2013. OCSE works to ensure NYC children receive the financial support of both parents. Because of its commitment to growth and improvement, OCSE was recently awarded the "2013 Most Improved Performance Award" for large districts from the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).

OCSE received the award for its continued advances in certain key federally-tracked performance measures, including total child support collections. Last year, OCSE broke its own records by collecting more than \$742 million on behalf of approximately a quarter of a million children. The 2013 total represents an increase of more than 45% over 2003.

"This award is another valuable acknowledgment of our unstinting efforts to help children and parents in New York City," HRA Commissioner Steven Banks said. "The critical role child support plays in reducing child poverty and strengthening families makes it especially important for us to do everything we can to build on the program's existing accomplishments. I want to thank OCSE Executive Deputy Commissioner Frances Pardus-Abbadessa and her staff for the work they do every day to help New York City children and families. This award is a tribute to their devotion to the program's goal of putting children first."

In a letter to Commissioner Banks announcing the award, OTDA Commissioner Kristin M. Proud wrote, "I commend your staff for their commitment and dedication to the families they serve. I wish your child support program continued success."

In addition to collections, the award also recognizes OCSE's improved performance in two other vital areas. One is the percentage of its total number of cases with a legally established child support order (known as the support establishment percentage). Another is the percentage of its cases where fatherhood has been legally established for children born outside of marriage (known as the paternity establishment percentage).

"I am grateful to Commissioner Proud and OTDA for recognizing the program's improvements and, with that, the care and skill that everyone at OCSE puts into helping children get the support they need," OCSE Executive Deputy Commissioner Frances Pardus-Abbadessa said. "At the same time, this award also honors the mothers and fathers of New York City. Their readiness to participate in the program and support their children is critical to its success. We hope to continue to improve in these ways and many others and to bring our services to even more of the city's fathers, mothers, and children."

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One possible explanation for the program’s improved performance is the emphasis OCSE has long placed on bringing innovative services to New York City families, particularly in trying to remove the barriers that keep some parents from paying their support. Since 2002, OCSE has had programs in place to connect noncustodial parents to jobs, and in more recent years it has developed programs to reduce the child support debt that noncustodial parents owe to the government and to better align child support payments with the noncustodial parent’s actual income.

“We firmly believe that parents want to support their children,” OCSE Executive Deputy Commissioner Pardus-Abbadessa said. “And we stand committed to working with both parents to make that possible.”

To learn more about the child support program, visit www.nyc.gov/hra/ocse.

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