

# Child Maintenance Service 2012 Scheme – Experimental Statistics Aug 13 – Feb 15

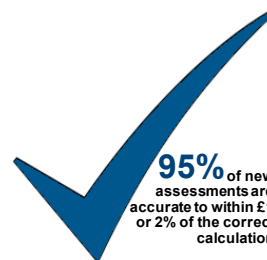
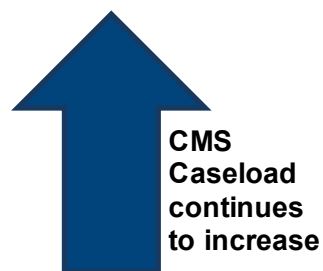
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## Introduction

This publication contains information on cases being processed on the 2012 statutory child maintenance scheme, delivered by the Child Maintenance Service (CMS). The 2012 Scheme was introduced alongside the government's reform of the child maintenance system to support separated parents to work together and set up their own family-based arrangements. The 2012 Scheme was introduced to support families who are unable to make arrangements themselves. The 2012 Scheme will replace the 1993 and 2003 Schemes (administered by the Child Support Agency) over the next few years as 1993 and 2003 cases are closed. Comparisons should not be made to previous schemes because of the different objectives of the 2012 Scheme and the relatively high proportion of cases in the course of making their first payment.

## Headlines



From 30 June 2014, application fees were introduced when applying to the 2012 scheme, along with charges for certain enforcement activities. Collection charges were introduced for using the Child Maintenance Service to collect and pay maintenance from August 2014.

The number of cases managed by the Child Maintenance Service continues to increase following the introduction of application and collection charging. **The caseload stood at 109,200 as at the end of February 2015**, an increase of 18% when compared to November 2014.

**Service levels remain high**; although there has been a slight reduction in the percentage of calls answered and those answered within 30 seconds. Accuracy levels have increased to 95% in February 2015 from 93% in November 2014.

Although complaints are increasing with the caseload, **the total number of complaints received represents less than 2% of the overall caseload.**



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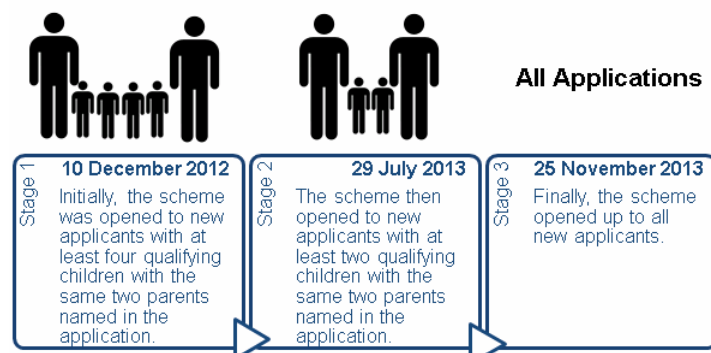
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## Introduction

This publication contains information on cases being processed on the 2012 statutory child maintenance scheme, delivered by the Child Maintenance Service. The data covers the period of August 2013 to February 2015.

The 2012 child maintenance scheme was introduced using a staged implementation process.



This release begins from the period where the pathfinder approach to the 2012 Scheme was open to new applicants with at least two qualifying children with the same two parents named in the application. Prior to August 2013 the caseload was restricted, with the low volumes of cases handled not being representative of the overall child maintenance caseload.

These statistics are still in the early stages of development and assurance. Some of the statistics are currently collated manually by accessing core systems while the development of automated system based reports continues. The statistics have therefore been classified as experimental and may be revised in future editions.

The [publication strategy for the 2012 Scheme](#) was published on 26 February 2014.

## Changes to this Publication

New reporting methodology has been developed to rectify issues with the underlying source report used to provide compliance information. The series of new methodology reporting Proportion of Case Groups Contributing towards Current Liability starts from December 2014 (Page 4 / Table 1.2).

Future updates may be subject to revision due to ongoing development of methodologies.

## Changes to Future Publications

Information on the 2012 Scheme continues to be developed and tested. Additional measures will be included in future publications when DWP statisticians are assured of the quality of the data, in line with the publication strategy.

## Upcoming Releases

The next release of Experimental Statistics on the 2012 Scheme will contain data up to May 2015 and will be published in June 2015.

## Supplementary excel tables

All underlying data included in the charts and figures featured in this summary is included in accompanying excel tables.

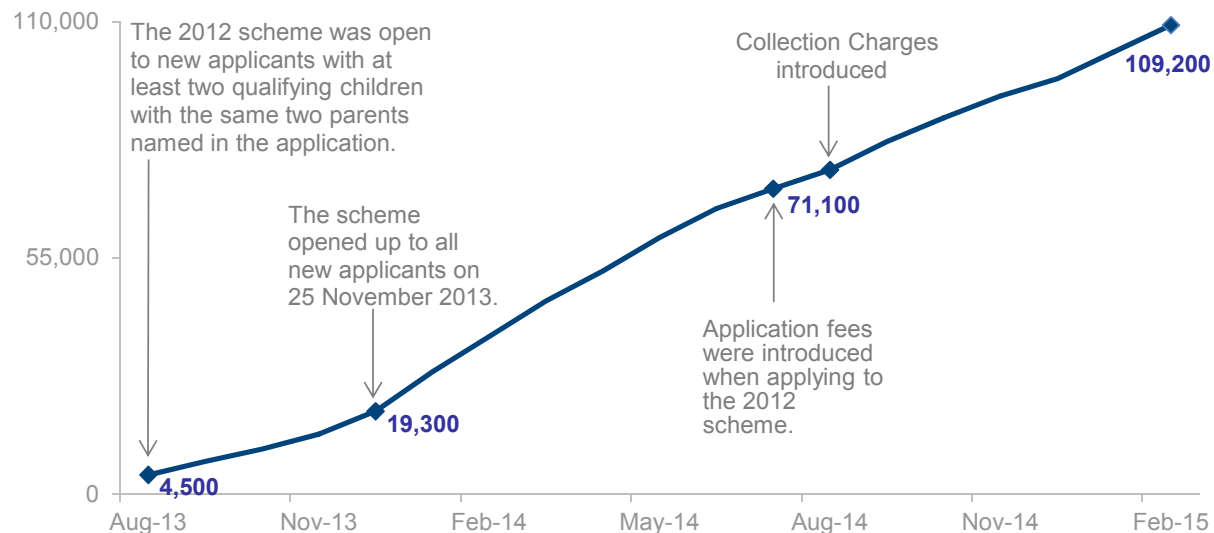
This includes tables on those applying to the 2012 Scheme, total cases managed by the system and breakdowns of cases paying through the scheme or directly to the receiving parent. It also includes figures on service standards, including telephony, accuracy and complaints.

This summary provides an overview. Page 7 provides an overview of the 2012 Child Maintenance Scheme and key terminology.

## Intake and Caseload

### The number of cases managed by the Child Maintenance Service continues to increase following the introduction of application & collection charging

Total caseload each month from August 2013 to February 2015



Cases on the 2012 Scheme have the option to pay maintenance via the CMS Calculation and Collect Service or pay maintenance directly to the receiving parent (Direct Pay). Where there is evidence that suggests that the paying parent is unlikely to pay, Direct Pay will not be appropriate and the Calculation and Collect Service will be used.

From 30 June 2014, application fees were introduced when applying to the 2012 scheme, along with charges for certain enforcement activities. Collection charges were introduced for using the Child Maintenance Service to collect and pay maintenance from August 2014.

### Main Findings

The number of cases managed on the 2012 Scheme increased by 18% in February 2015 when compared to November 2014.

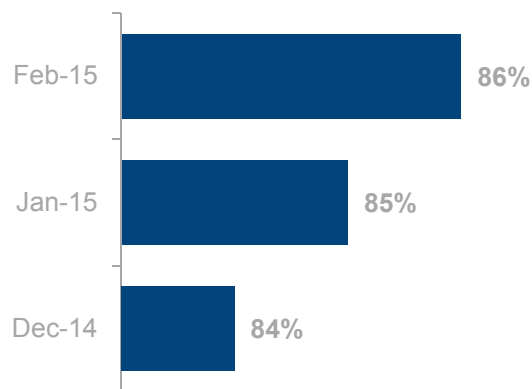
A potential system issue has been identified which impacts New Applications, whilst investigations are being carried out all cases potentially affected have been removed from intake figures in Table 1.1.

See **Table 1.1** for full data.

## Compliance and Method of Payment

**The percentage of case groups contributing towards current liability is increasing.**

Case Groups Contributing towards Current Liability (%) December 2014 to February 2015



A Case Group is defined as all of the cases associated to a Paying Parent. For example, there may be two separate cases for children in relation to the same paying parent. Both of these cases will be linked by the paying parent and defined as a Case Group.

**Chosen method of payment of those who are due to pay maintenance as at February 2015**

Collection Service, 33%

Direct Pay, 67%

Clients are encouraged wherever possible to use Direct Pay as their method of payment. Collection fees were introduced from August 2014 for clients who use the Calculation and Collection Service. A 20% charge will be added to the paying parents liability and a 4% charge deducted from the receiving parents maintenance payment.

### Main Findings

6 out of 7 are contributing towards their current liability



As at the end of February 2015, **86% of Case Groups were contributing towards their current liability.**

Issues with the underlying source report used to provide compliance data has now been rectified with the series of new methodology starting from December 2014. This is available in **Table 1.2.**

As at the end of February 2015, **67% of cases that were due to pay their liability chose to pay maintenance directly to the receiving parent.** This is an increase on the end of November 2015 position of 64%. Since the measure was reported in August 2014, the number of cases paying money direct to the receiving parent has been on an upward trend.

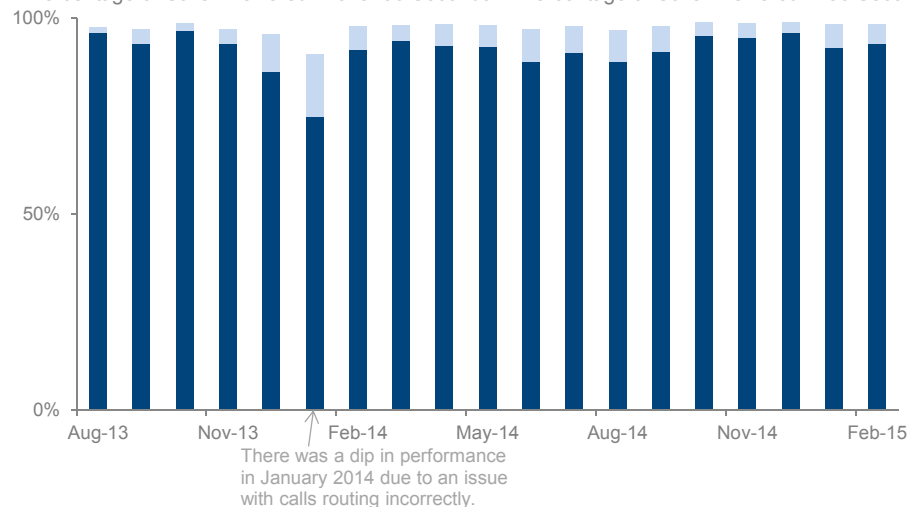
See **Tables 1.3 & 1.4** for historical splits of chosen method of payment.

## Service Standards

The percentage of calls answered remains high with the majority of calls being answered within 30 seconds

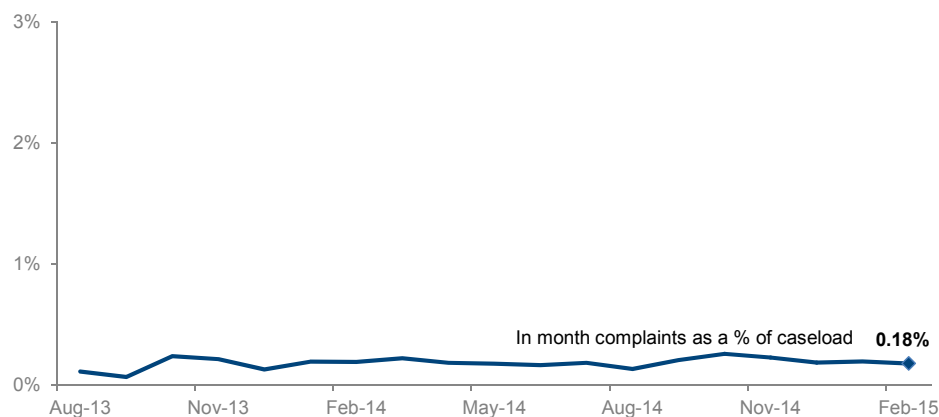
Percentage of Calls answered, split by time taken to answer - August 2013 to February 2015

■ Percentage of Calls Answered in over 30 Seconds ■ Percentage of Calls Answered in 30 Seconds



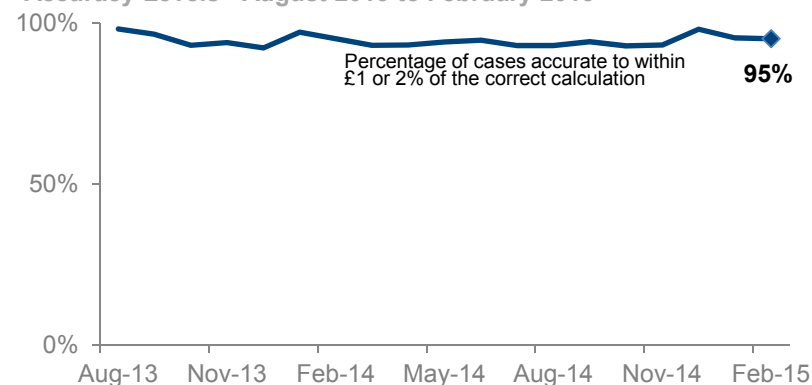
The number of complaints received in month has broadly increased as more applications are made to the 2012 Scheme, but remains less than 0.5% of the total caseload

In month complaints as a percentage of caseload - August 2013 to February 2015



Accuracy levels have remained above 90%

Accuracy Levels - August 2013 to February 2015



### Main Findings

Telephony performance has remained high overall with exception to the dip in January due to calls routing incorrectly. **In February 2015, 98% of calls were answered, with 93% answered within 30 seconds.**

Although latest figures show slight reductions, the percentage of calls answered has remained above 90% since August 2013.

See [Table 1.5](#) for full data.

**Accuracy** has increased by 2 percentage points when compared to November 2014, **standing at 95%.**

Accuracy is defined as the percentage of cases that are accurate to within £1 or 2% of the correct calculation.

### Complaints

There were **195 complaints** received in February 2015. The number of complaints received in-month represents 0.18% of the overall caseload.

The number of complaints received to date represents less than 2% of the overall caseload.

See [Table 1.7](#) for full data.

## Methodology

Prior to December 2013, data is not representative of the full caseload due to the 2012 Scheme being introduced using a phased approach. During the early stages of the 2012 Scheme, applications were still accepted on the 2003 Scheme where the criteria was not met to apply to the 2012 Scheme. Please see the [Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary of Statistics](#) for historical intake figures.

### Data Sources

From August 2013 to March 2014 **Intake and Caseload** information was produced through interrogation of the Siebel case management system. From April 2014 onwards, this information is sourced from an automated report, via Contingency Management Information (MI). A potential system issue has been identified which impacts New Applications, whilst investigations are being carried out all cases potentially affected have been removed from intake figures in Table 1.1. This has impacted intake figures from September 2014 on an incremental basis, starting at around 0.5% and increasing to 8.5% in the latest month. This may result in previous months figures being revised upwards slightly in future publications.

**Compliance** ([Table 1.2](#): Proportion of Case Groups Contributing towards Current Liability) is derived by dividing the number of case groups that have paid by the number of case groups due to pay. This includes cases paying both via the Calculation and Collection service and Direct Pay. Cases paying via Direct Pay are assumed to be fully compliant as clients can come back to the CMS if there is a default on their payment or to request a revised calculation. This information is sourced from an automated report which has been redeveloped due to issues following the introduction of application fees and charging as part of the Child Maintenance Reforms. The series of new methodology reporting the Proportion of Case Groups Contributing towards Current Liability starts from December 2014.

**Service Type** information in [Table 1.3](#) for the period between December 2013 and May 2014 is based on Case Groups and is sourced from an automated report. Due to redevelopment of the underlying source report, [Table 1.4](#) provides Service Type information sourced directly from the Siebel source system. This data is available From August 2014, giving a case based view as at the end of each month. This series may be subject to revision in future editions due to the implementation of new methodologies.

**Telephony** data is collated on an automated telephony system which routes callers to the correct caseworker. This system has a built in management information capability which produces detailed reports including calls received, calls answered and speed to answer for all calls.

**Accuracy** figures are derived by checking a sample of cases on which new assessments or changes to assessments have been carried out to ensure that the calculation was accurate. The sample is derived by manually accessing the core system and results are recorded and reported in Excel.

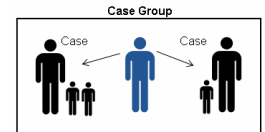
**Complaints** information for the 2012 statutory scheme is collated clerically.

## Definitions

**Intake:** The number of new applications received to the 2012 statutory scheme.

**Caseload:** The number of cases which are being managed on the 2012 statutory scheme.

**Case Group:** A case group consists of all of the cases associated to a Paying Parent.



**Compliance:** The proportion of case groups who are contributing towards their current liability. Any contribution in the quarter, regardless of the amount, is counted as contributing.

**Direct Pay:** A case is classed as 'Direct Pay' when the maintenance calculation has been derived by the CMS (after assessment of the case) and the paying parent pays child maintenance directly to the receiving parent. These cases are assumed to be fully meeting their current liability (since clients can come back to the CMS if there is a default on their payment or to request a revised calculation).

**Calculation and Collection:** A case is classed as 'Calculation and Collection' when the maintenance calculation has been derived by the CMS (after assessment of the case) and the paying parent pays child maintenance to the CMS. The CMS then sends this money to the receiving parent. Money is paid into a bank or post office account or via [simple payment](#) method.

Further information on [how to pay child maintenance](#) is available online.

**Service Type:** This is the chosen method of payment of cases due to pay maintenance. Service type is split by cases paying via the Calculation & Collection Service or via Direct Pay.

**Telephony:** The percentage of calls answered and the percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds.

**Accuracy:** The percentage of cases that are accurate to within £1 or 2% of the correct calculation.

**Complaints:** The number of complaints received on the 2012 Scheme.

# 2012 Scheme Overview

**CHILD MAINTENANCE OPTIONS**  
 The Child Maintenance Options service encourages collaboration and helps parents explore whether they can make a family-based arrangement without using the statutory service. The Child Maintenance Options service provides help and support to parents to enable them to put family-based arrangements in place.

Family-based child maintenance arrangements are often the best option for everyone involved. They can be arranged privately without Government intervention, do not incur charges to the taxpayer, and are flexible and can be easily tailored to individual circumstances. Working together to agree a child maintenance arrangement can also help reduce conflict and keep both parents involved in their children's lives.

Research has shown that family-based arrangements are in the best interests of children because they foster collaboration which can make issues around contact or finances easier to manage. Wherever possible, we will encourage parents to work together and set up their own family-based child maintenance arrangements.

New Applicants

93/03 Case Closure

Where clients are unable to make a family-based arrangement an application to the 2012 Scheme can be made. The Department understands that not every parent will be willing or able to make their own arrangements outside of the statutory scheme. The 2012 Child Maintenance Scheme has been developed to deliver a more efficient statutory service for those who need it.

## Application Stage to Receiving Maintenance

**Application**  
 From 30 June 2014, all new applications to the 2012 Scheme will have to pay a £20 application fee (with the exception of cases where the applicant is: under 19 years of age, a resident in Northern Ireland, or they are or have been a victim of domestic violence). Contact is made with HMRC to determine income details of the paying parent. Wherever possible clients will be encouraged to use Direct Pay as their method of payment. From August 2014, Clients who use the Calculation and Collection Service will be subject to collection fees. A 20% charge will be added to the paying parents liability and a 4% charge deducted from the receiving parents maintenance payment.

**New Case**  
 First contact and gathering information stage including issuing assessment details. Where there is evidence that suggests that the paying parent is unlikely to pay, Direct Pay will not be appropriate and the Collect & Pay service will be used.

**Maintenance**  
 Once the payment schedule is in place the case moves into regular maintenance. Change of circumstances to cases generally occur once in this stage which can lead to changes to status, method of payment and employment. An example would be an annual review that each case must go through in order to update its assessment each year.

**Enforcement**  
 If a case is non compliant or does not pay the full amount of liability owed then maintenance arrears will begin to build. Continued non-compliance and a build up of arrears will lead to enforcement action being taken; this can range from a Deduction from Earnings Order to a Custodial Sentence.

## Notes

The 1993 and 2003 statutory schemes continue to be delivered by the Child Support Agency (CSA). However, over time the 2012 Scheme will be the only child support scheme in operation. The process to close CSA cases began on 30 June 2014 and is expected to take around three years.

Comparisons should not be made to previous schemes because of the different objectives of the 2012 Scheme and the relatively high proportion of cases in the course of making their first payment. The reforms to the child maintenance system are to place emphasis on supporting parents to set up collaborative, family-based child maintenance arrangements, so that the statutory scheme is no longer the default option.

## Uses and Users

The main users of the statistics in this document include: the public, external interest groups, Parliament, Department for Work and Pensions Ministers, Ministers and officials in other Government departments, Academics, the media and external commentators and Department for Work and Pensions policy and operational officials.

The CMS 2012 Experimental Statistics are used by a number of internal stakeholders for:

- Monitoring and reporting performance trends against key indicators
- Informing briefing, lines to take and press releases
- Internal communications
- Answering Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information requests
- Undertaking internal analysis and producing figures at a lower and more granular level
- Setting internal performance measures
- Policy evaluation and to help external users gauge the effectiveness of Child Maintenance Systems

Our external, internet based, publication means that we cannot ascertain all the varied uses of the numbers produced. However, we do know the experimental statistics are used for:

- Providing general information on the Child Maintenance Service in Great Britain
- Measuring performance of the new Child Maintenance Scheme.
- Informing discussions and meetings with external stakeholders and MPs
- Social research and academic studies of the effectiveness of social policy

## Feedback Welcome

The Department for Work and Pensions is always glad to hear the comments and views of customers on the 2012 Experimental Statistics. Please email [sarah.windass@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.windass@dwp.gsi.gov.uk).