

# **SRLN Brief: OCSE Guidance on Collaborative Child Support Activities (SRLN 2016)**



The [Office of Child Support Enforcement](#) (OCSE) has developed a strong collaboration with the [Department of Justice's \(DOJ\) Access to Justice Initiative](#). The Access to Justice Initiative was established to improve access to justice in the criminal and civil justice system and to help the justice system efficiently deliver outcomes that are fair and accessible to all, irrespective of wealth and status. As part of the initiative, DOJ works with stakeholders to increase access to counsel and pro se legal assistance and to improve the justice delivery systems that serve people who are unable to afford lawyers. The OCSE-DOJ collaboration focuses on improving self-help strategies in state judicial and administrative child support proceedings, helping states implement the four criteria in [Turner v. Rogers](#), 131 S.Ct. 2507 (2011), and reducing the use of civil contempt that leads to incarceration

in states that use civil contempt to enforce child support. Please see below for more resources from the federal government:

- [Child Support Factsheet for Access to Justice Innovations](#)
- [HHS Guidance Letter on partnering with other programs, including outreach, referral, and case management activities](#)

See also the SRLN [IV-D Funding Resource Guide](#) for more information about how states have integrated these services into their access initiatives.

Finally, please note that the HHS grant initiative [Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt](#) commenced September 2016. The following description can be found on the project website:

In September 2016, OCSE awarded [Section 1115 grants for the PJAC project](#) to 5 state child support agencies in Arizona, California, Michigan, Ohio, and Virginia, and awarded a grant to Georgia to manage the [Evaluation of the Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt \(PJAC\)](#).

The five-year demonstration project will allow grantees to examine whether incorporating procedural justice principles into child support business practices increases reliable child support payments. The goals are to increase reliable payments, reduce arrears, minimize the need for continued enforcement actions and sanctions, and reduce the inappropriate use of contempt." Visit the project page here: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/css/grants/current-grants/pjac>.

Last updated on October 15, 2020.

**Year published:** 2016

**Document Author:**

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