

Friend of the Court

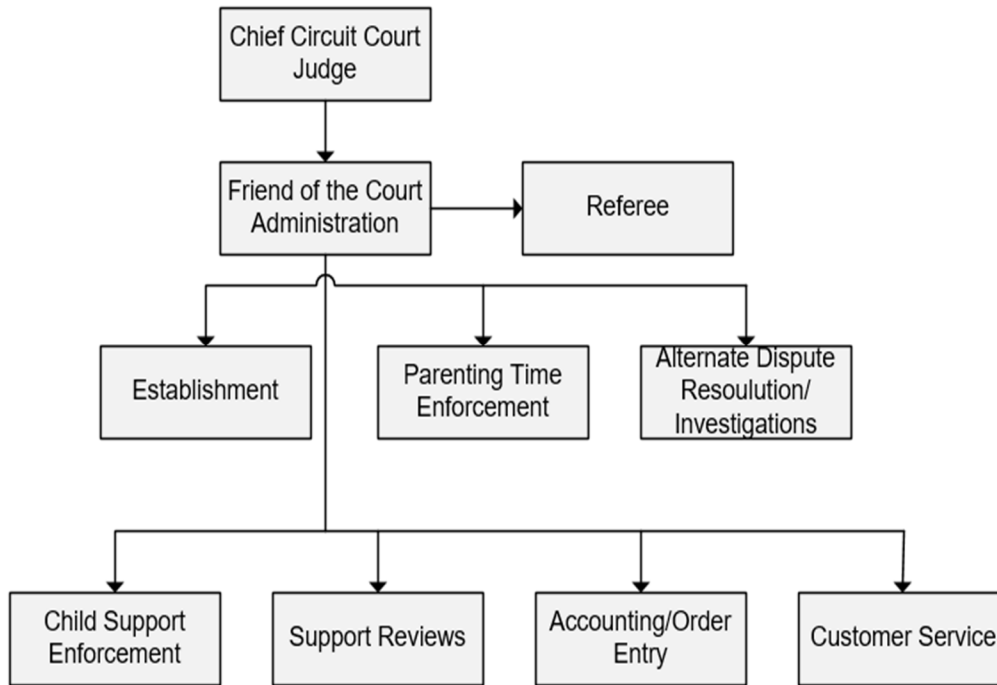
Activities

Enforcement of court orders regarding custody, parenting time, and support of minor children.

Conducts hearings, investigations, and makes reports and recommendations to the Court on those matters.

The FOC offers mediation as an alternative dispute resolution process, for custody and parenting time issues.

Establishes paternity and support and parenting time orders for families.



Mission Statement

In keeping with the best interest of children, the Jackson County Friend of the Court will provide quality services in a fair and respectful manner.



Programs

[Judgment Order Entry Fees](#)

[FOC Duties](#)

Judgement Order Entry Fees

Strategic Plan Impact/Accomplishments

See FOC Duties budget page.

Budget Adjustments

There are no significant budget adjustments to this program with the exception of the merger between the Friend of the Court and the Prosecuting Attorney Child Support Division. The Friend of the Court budget absorbed the budget portion of this division.

FOC Duties

Strategic Plan Impact

✓ Safe Community

Investigating and making custody, parenting time, and support recommendations helps ensure the proper care and custody of children. Facilitative Information Gathering Conferences (FIGS), formerly known as Conciliations, allows parents to mediate their disputes and to reach their own custody, parenting time, and support agreements, which reduces the likelihood of parental kidnapping, non-payment of support, and parental alienation. Domestic Violence Screening and Safety Planning for families with domestic violence contributes to a safe community by providing safe options for parents at risk or struggling with domestic violence. Reporting suspected abuse and neglect and conducting criminal history checks on FOC employees and vendors contributes to a safe community.

Through its participation in the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative (MPRI), the FOC reviews parolee support obligations to ensure that support is set at a reasonable amount, and

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focuses more on job seeking initiatives as opposed to demanding unrealistic payment plans. This reduces parolee anxiety, feelings of hopelessness, and the chance of a parolee returning to a life of crime. The Warrant Unit arrests individuals who have outstanding warrants.

Safeguarding confidential FOC files keeps the community safe from improper disclosure of confidential information.

✓ **Economic Development**

The duties performed by the Enforcement/Casework, Bench Warrant, and Interstate Units advances economic development. By enforcing and collecting child and spousal support, Jackson's children and families are afforded financial support to help them meet their basic needs. Support monies are often spent within the community, which ensures continued growth and vibrancy within the local, regional, state, and global marketplace.

Additionally, the Friend of the Court is partnering with Michigan Works and Temporary Employment Agencies to connect unemployed or underemployed parents with educational and job opportunities.

The timely entry and modification of support orders into the Michigan Child Support Enforcement System by the Accounting Department is critical to the receipting and distribution of support payments. The FOC Support Services Unit, in addition to the Michigan Disbursement Unit, accepts payments locally to ensure that no money is turned away. By reviewing support obligations, the FOC helps ensure that support is set at manageable levels. Customers are more likely to pay their support, if they feel their income has been fairly evaluated.

✓ **Healthy Community**

The FOC program has a direct impact on the healthy community strategic priority. By investigating and making recommended orders for custody and parenting time, this contributes to a healthy community by providing appropriate and safe parenting time and custody arrangements. In some cases, supervised parenting time may be appropriate, therapeutic services may be necessary, or non-traditional approaches for parenting may be required.

The ADR and Investigation Department works with parents to evaluate the best interests of children to create a healthy environment for that child to develop. This may include court

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ordered mental health assessments and/or counseling, drug and alcohol counseling, and anger management or parenting classes. The Enforcement Unit contributes to a healthy community by enforcing court ordered child support to ensure that the basic needs of children and families are met. In addition, the Enforcement Unit enforces court ordered health insurance provisions and delinquent medical bills, which all directly relate to a healthy community. Reporting suspected child abuse and neglect also contributes to a healthy community by providing intervening services for the children at risk of abuse or neglect.

Accomplishments

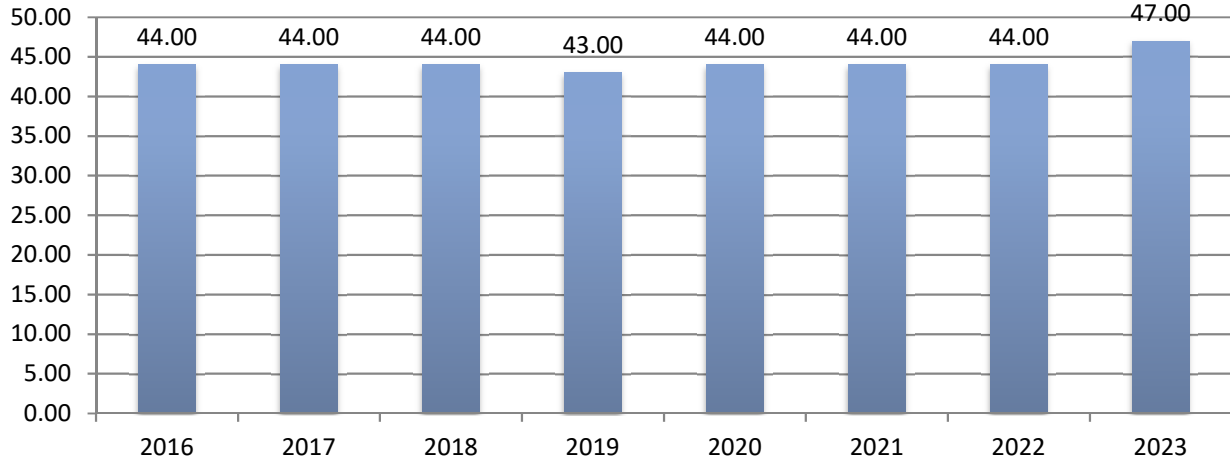
- ✓ Enforcement / Arrears Management: Collaborated with Matterhorn, Inc. to provide text and email notifications for hearings as well as text / email communication between caseworkers and clients.
- ✓ Changes: Due to COVID 19 restrictions, developed virtual / zoom hearing and meeting options to reduce the need for parents to physically appear for hearings.
- ✓ Changes: New Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) instituted from the Office of Child Support related to locate, medical support, timely enforcement, and timely modifications.
- ✓ Collaboration: Combined offices with the Prosecuting Attorney Child Support Division to create a singular entity for clients to receive their child support services.

Budget Adjustments

The FOC has absorbed the budget portion of the Prosecuting Attorney Child Support Division moving into 2023.

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Friend of the Court (FOC) FTE History



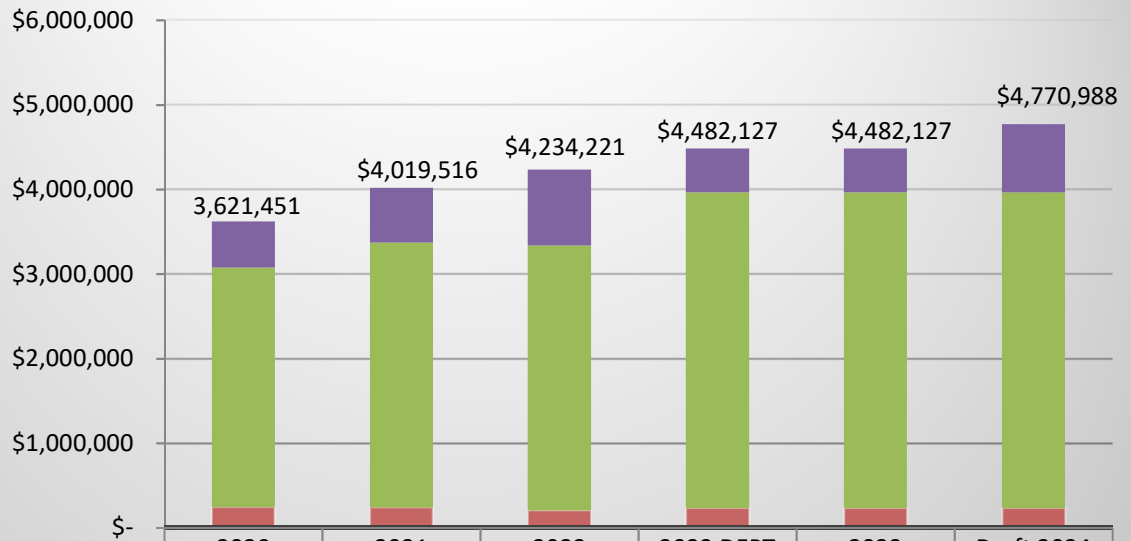
Child Support Enforcement Revenues



	2020 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL	2022 BUDGET	2023 DEPT REQUESTED	2023 BUDGET	Draft 2024 BUDGET
■ CHARGES/FEES	\$39,960	\$43,540	\$51,800	\$43,500	\$43,500	\$43,500
TOTAL PROGRAM REVENUE	\$39,960	\$43,540	\$51,800	\$43,500	\$43,500	\$43,500

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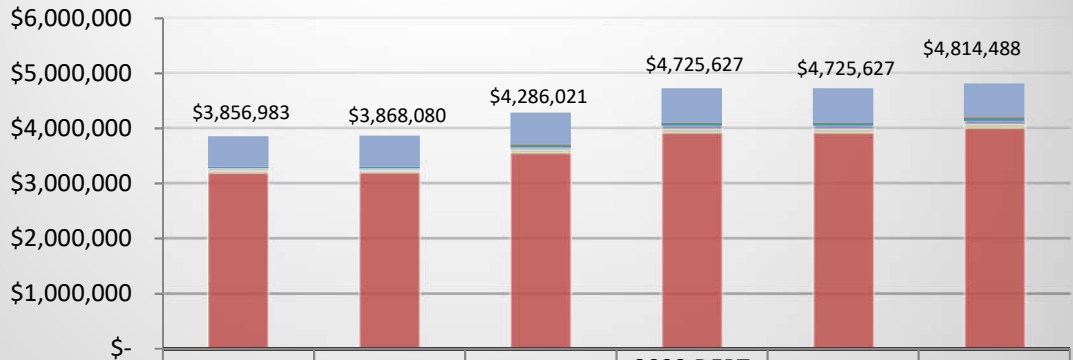
FOC Duties Revenues



	2020 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL	2022 BUDGET	2023 DEPT REQUESTED	2023 BUDGET	Draft 2024 BUDGET
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: purple; margin-right: 5px;"></div> TRANSFER IN </div>	\$546,396	\$648,468	\$896,280	\$515,112	\$515,112	\$803,973
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: green; margin-right: 5px;"></div> INTERGOVERNMENTAL </div>	\$2,830,397	\$3,131,181	\$3,131,205	\$3,734,671	\$3,734,671	\$3,734,671
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: red; margin-right: 5px;"></div> CHARGES/FEES </div>	\$244,658	\$239,867	\$206,736	\$232,344	\$232,344	\$232,344
TOTAL PROGRAM REVENUE	\$3,621,451	\$4,019,516	\$4,234,221	\$4,482,127	\$4,482,127	\$4,770,988

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FOC Expenditures



	2020 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL	2022 BUDGET	2023 DEPT REQUESTED	2023 BUDGET	Draft 2024 BUDGET
TRANSFER OUT	\$550,193	\$566,074	\$568,996	\$610,804	\$610,804	\$610,830
CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$7,954	\$-	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
OTHER EXPENSES	\$19,103	\$24,775	\$46,600	\$51,300	\$51,300	\$51,300
CONTRACT SERVICES	\$41,332	\$38,423	\$49,091	\$69,691	\$69,691	\$69,691
SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$43,880	\$41,380	\$53,900	\$60,985	\$60,985	\$60,985
PERSONNEL SERVICES	\$3,194,521	\$3,197,428	\$3,552,434	\$3,917,847	\$3,917,847	\$4,006,682
TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS	\$3,856,983	\$3,868,080	\$4,286,021	\$4,725,627	\$4,725,627	\$4,814,488

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Strategic Outcomes

Indicator	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Target	2023 Target
Current Support Percentage Collected	69.5	81.57	81.3	80.9	81	81
Percent of cases receiving arrears collections	70.5	69.85	81.2	76.6	73	73
Total amount of support collected	\$22,126,018	\$22,155,610	\$25,615,804	\$22,500,100	\$22.1 million	\$22.1 million

Other Key Indicators

Indicator	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Target	2023 Target
Total number of Cases	13,492	13,324	12,738	12,451	13,000	13,000
Telephone calls handled	25,655	27,113	20,416	21,163	22,000	22,000
Conciliations/investigations completed	428	381	274	442	400	400
Support reviews completed	943	921	765	532	800	800
Wednesday show cause hearings held	4,736	4,213	2001	1450	2,000	2,000
% Cases with locate action within 30 days	97.2%	82.2%	88.3%	94.8%	75%	75%
% Support Reviews within 180 days	98.0%	99.3%	92.1%	99.2%	75%	75%
Average wait time per phone call (min)	1 min 4 sec	1 min 6 sec	1 min 36 sec	1 min 5 sec	2 min	2 min
% Cases with timely enforcement action	94.6%	95.1%	91.6%	94.1%	75%	75%
Grievances Acknowledged / Total	1 / 8	1/11	2/9	1 / 4	2 / 10	2 / 10