

2021 Corporation Counsel and Child Support Annual Report

The Office of Corporation Counsel provides civil legal services including legal advice, assistance, formal opinions and court representation to the County Board, County departments, elected officials and County commissions, boards and committees. The duties of the Corporation Counsel's Office are established by Wis. Stat. § 59.42, and Chapter 2.07 of the Eau Claire County Code of General Ordinances.

The Child Support Agency (CSA) is responsible for establishing paternity and establishing and enforcing child support orders and health insurance orders provided for by Title IV of the federal social security act. Provision of these services by Wisconsin counties is mandated by Wis. Stat. § 59.53(5).

Corporation Counsel 2021 Accomplishments

Successfully maintained our caseload during the pandemic through the continued use of e-filing and virtual hearings.

By legal services provided, assisted DHS in reaching permanency for 34 children through TPR and Guardianship cases.

Argued cases before the Wisconsin Supreme Court and Court of Appeals and helped to establish law related to TPR cases.

Participated in relevant training.

Staff actively participated in the following statewide organizations

- Wisconsin Association of County Corporation Counsel
- Wisconsin Child Support Enforcement Association Board and Child Support Review Committee
- Wisconsin Child Support Enforcement KIDS Modernization Workgroup
- Wisconsin Bar Association, Government Lawyers Section, CLE Committee

Staff actively participated in the following local organizations, committees and teams

- Eau Claire Alliance
- Eau Claire County's PORCH Committee
- Drug Endangered Children Committee
- Child Death Review Team
- Coordinated Services Across the Lifespan Committee
- Juvenile Justice Collaborating Committee
- Multi-Disciplinary Team
- Suicide Death Review Team
- Presenter for ECASD Mandatory Reporting in all Eau Claire Schools
- Crisis Team
- Youth Leadership Eau Claire
- 980 Committee to locate house for CH. 980 subjects
- Overdose Death Review Team

Staff actively participated in the following county committees

- United Way
- ARPA Committee
- Chippewa - St. Croix Passenger Rail Commission
- Communicable Disease Taskforce
- JEDI Taskforce

Child Support 2021 Accomplishments

Maintained office morale and performance during COVID-19.

Earned the Outstanding Achievement Award for exceeding paternity establishment and court order establishment performance standards, increasing current support collections from the previous year, and increasing court order establishment by more than 0.5%.

\$16,066,818.66 in child support collected.

CSA continued collaboration with Workforce Resource, Inc. by referring non-custodial parents to Workforce Resource for employment and training assistance.

Child Support Manager met virtually with local legislature and testified before Joint Finance Committee to request increased funding. Child support funding was increased by \$1.75M GPR per year.

Worked with the County Board to pass an ordinance for the collection of fees in NIVD cases to help curb costs to the CSA.

Hired and Trained Legal Specialist II, Administrative Associate III, and Fiscal Associate II.

Co-Hosted the 2021 Wisconsin Child Support Enforcement Association Fall Conference in La Crosse, WI.

Participated in relevant trainings.

Staff actively participated in the following statewide organizations:

- Wisconsin Child Support Enforcement Association Board of Directors
- Wisconsin Child Support Enforcement Association Child Support Training Advisory Committee
- Wisconsin Child Support Enforcement Association Legislative Committee
- Wisconsin Child Support Enforcement Fall Conference Planning Committee
- Wisconsin Child Support Enforcement Awards, Nominations, and Scholarship Committee

Staff actively participated in the following local organizations, committees, and teams:

- Eau Claire Chamber Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce

Staff actively participated in the following county committees:

- United Way
- JEDI Taskforce

Corporation Counsel Alignment with Strategic Plan

Ensure Financial Stability.	Innovate and adapt.	Improve Collaboration
Maintain/ increase fees for GN/PP Cases.	Prosecute cases in the most efficient manner through use of technology.	Through the use of technology collaborating with the courts, agencies and governmental bodies
Work with DHS and CSA to make sure the county is capturing all the IV-D and IV-E funding for legal services provided	Continue to evaluate and identify possible areas for increased efficiency and reduced costs	

Child Support Alignment with Strategic Plan

Ensure Financial Stability.	Innovate and adapt.	Improve Collaboration
Improve performance to increase child support funding	Review and revise departmental policies and procedures	Connect with community resources to assist/refer non-custodial parents
Establish and enforce child support and medical support to ensure children are supported by both parents	Prepare for department succession due to anticipated retirements in next few years	
Continued advocacy for increased child support funding from the State	Continue to evaluate and identify possible areas for increased efficiencies and reduced costs (i.e. paperless)	

Corporation Counsel 2022 Opportunities

- Continue to maintain our effectiveness by adapting to the ongoing pandemic to allow remote and in-person hearings and meetings as able and required.
- Hire a new Corporation Counsel
- Hire and train an Assistant Corporation Counsel.
- Continue participation in statewide groups such as WCSEA, WACCC, State Bar Govt. Lawyers, so that we are able to remain current with the law and issues that are relevant to the county, the corporation counsel office, and the child support agency.
- Continue to promote training and cross training within the office to expand the capabilities Promote our new and existing staff.
- Continue to work with the Department of Human Services on resolving the backlog of TPR cases.
- Continue to promote a system within the office that allows employees flexibility to work remotely when necessary.

Child Support 2022 Opportunities

Continued review and revision of policies and procedures.

Implementation of WiKids/CCAP Interface.

Implementation of Multifactor Authentication to access applications.

Continued training for newer staff and succession planning for upcoming retirements.

Continued participation in statewide committees and WCSEA Board to provide input and stay up to date on changes to policy and law.

Hiring for vacant Fiscal Associate position to bring office to fully staffed.

Focus on performance to increase performance outcomes which affects funding.

Manage increasing caseloads in child support and impacts of COVID-19.

Implementation of changes in state and federal law.

Continue to lobby the Legislature to support funding increases and issues related to birth cost recovery.

Job Fairs in collaboration with Workforce Resource, Inc.

Participation in the Institute for Research on Poverty- University of Wisconsin Madison study on Child Support Agencies as Connectors study.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS, GOALS AND OUTCOME MEASUREMENTS

			2021 Budget	2021 Levy	FTE
#1 General Legal Services			\$644,043	\$607,043	5.98
			<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Number of Child Abuse Restraining Orders opened			32	25	24
Number of claims reviewed			45	13	13
Number of contracts reviewed			73	42	48
Number of contracts (all) maintained			255	251	258
Number of county ordinance violations pretrials held			28	13	42
Number of foreclosure cases reviewed			3	6	3
Number of ordinances and resolutions drafted			36	50	55
Number of ordinances and resolutions reviewed and/or revised			115	140	111
Number of juvenile guardianship cases opened			17	21	13
Performance Goal	Outcome Measures	Benchmark	2019	2020	2021
To provide timely review and drafting of contracts, resolutions and ordinances.	97% of contracts will be reviewed within 7 days of receipt.	97%	100%	85%	100%
	97% of resolutions and ordinances referred for drafting will be returned for review or additional information within 7 days.	97%	100%	97%	100%
To provide cost-effective services.	100% of in-house legal services will be provided at a rate less expensive than local private attorney rates as illustrated in annual local attorney rate survey.	100%	100%	100%	100%
To process claims filed against the County within two days of receipt by Corporation Counsel, excluding weekends and holidays.	95% of claims filed against the county, will be processed within 2 days of receipt of the claim by Corporation Counsel, excluding weekends and holidays.	95%	100%	100%	100%
#2 CHIPS, JIPS, TPR'S AND DHS LEGAL SERVICES					
			<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Number of CHIPS cases opened			128	120	119
Number of CHIPS cases involving Meth			67	79	65
Number of CHIPS Petitions filed			89	103	98
Number of CHIPS Petitions filed involving Meth:			52	68	52
Number of JIPS cases opened:			146	100	114
Number of TPR cases opened:			18	21*	24*
Performance Goal	Outcome Measures	Benchmark	2019	2020	2021
To provide timely support and competent representation to DHS staff in prosecuting CHIPS and JIPS cases.	100% of CHIPS and JIPS referrals will be responded to within 20 days of Corporation Counsel's receipt.	100%	100%	100%	100%
To provide cost-effective services.	100% of in-house legal services will be provided at a rate less expensive than local private attorney rates as illustrated in annual local attorney rate survey.	100%	100%	100%	100%

- *Includes TPR cases that were assigned to outside counsel. *

#3 CHAPTERS 51, 54 AND 55 AND ANNUAL REVIEWS					
Number of Chapter 51 cases opened			2019 360	2020 382	2021 331
Number of Chapter 51 (New) cases committed			63	41	40
Number of Chapter 51 recommitment cases continued:			51	35	31
Number of Chapter 51 recommitment cases completed by stipulation:			41	22	26
Number of Chapter 51 recommitment cases requiring court appearances:			10	13	5
Number of Chapters 54 and 55 cases opened:			52	51	77
Number of Chapter 54 Temporary Guardianship cases opened:			29	26	43
Number of Protective Placement Annual Reviews scheduled:			305	318	281
Total of 54 & 55 and Annual Review fees collected			\$31,480	\$25,025	\$29,150
Performance Goal	Outcome Measures	Benchmark	2019	2020	2021
To provide timely support and competent representation to DHS staff prosecuting Chapter 51 mental commitments.	100% of Chapter 51 emergency detentions and recommitments, and Chapter 54 annual Watt's reviews will be processed and completed within the statutory time requirements.	100%	100%	100%	100%
To provide timely support and competent representation to DHS staff prosecuting Chapters 54 and 55 guardianship and protective placements and annual reviews.	100% of Chapter 54 guardianship and protective placement petitions will be completed within the statutory time requirement.	100%	100%	100%	100%
To provide cost-effective services.	100% of in-house legal services will be provided at a rate less expensive than local private attorney rates as illustrated in annual local attorney rate survey.	100%	100%	100%	100%
#4 BUILDING, ZONING AND HEALTH CODE ENFORCEMENT					
Number of Building, Zoning and Health Code cases opened during year:			2019 2	2020 3	2021 4
Number of Building, Zoning and Health Code cases resolved during year:			0	2	1
Performance Goal	Outcome Measures	Benchmark	2019	2020	2021
To provide timely support and competent representation to the Planning and Development Department staff in prosecution of building and zoning code violations.	100% of zoning matters referred will be reviewed on a monthly basis with zoning staff until resolved.	100%	100%	100%	100%
To provide cost-effective services.	100% of in-house legal services will be provided at a rate less expensive than local private attorney rates as illustrated in annual local attorney rate survey.	12/yr.	Yes	Yes	Yes

#5 Child Support			2021 Budget	2021 Levy	FTE's
			\$1,337,209	\$64,568	16.02
			2019	2020	2021
Full service (IV-D) cases:			5,858	5,613	5,455
Financial record-keeping only cases (non IV-D):			1,650	1,755	1,834
Performance Goal	Outcome Measures	Benchmark	2019	2020	2021
Maximize performance-based funding and medical support incentives to minimize county levy for the program.	Court ordered rate will meet or exceed the federal/state target of 80%.	80%	90.93%	92.29%	93.94%
	Paternity establishment rate will meet or exceed federal/state target of 80%.	80%	103.53%	103.54%	104.43
	Arrears collection rate will meet or exceed federal/state target of 80%.	80%	69.51%	72.32%	72.35%
	Current support collection rate will meet or exceed federal/state target of 80%.	80%	72.66%	73.02%	72.81%
Obtain birth cost repayments and health insurance orders when appropriate to maximize MSL incentives	Receipt of budgeted amount		35,304	58,645	12,975
Provide services per State and Federal regulations, and State/County contract.	There will be no substantiated administrative customer complaints.	None	None	None	None
	100% of contracts will be in compliance with state/county contract requirements.	100%	100%	100%	100%
	There were no violations of federal regulations cited during the fiscal year.	None	None	None	None
#6 COLLECTIONS					
			2019	2020	2021
Number of collections cases referred, and files opened			0	0	0
Number of tax intercept filed			16	16	0
Number of payments received from tax intercept			\$6394.56	\$6,935.24	\$4981.59
Number of payments received, excluding tax intercepts			\$1,069	165.00	150.00
Corporation Counsel Fees collected			132.50	285.00	175.00
Total amount collected			<u>\$7311.08</u> \$48,370.42*	\$7385.24	\$5306.59
2019 *\$55,681.50 includes \$48,370.42 collected in "19 from Bergman Logging which is deposited into Parks a& Forest account.					
Performance Goal	Outcome Measures	Benchmark	2019	2020	2021
To provide timely support and competent representation in collection matters.	95% of tax intercept cases that qualify will be referred to the Department of Revenue ("DOR") within 7 days.	95%	100%	100%	100%
To provide cost-effective services	The cost of collections will be less than the amount of money collected	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Totals			2021 Budget \$1,981,252	2021 Levy \$671,611	FTE 22