

Washington State 2010 Child Support Order Review
Additional Analysis – March 2011
Deviations for Residential Schedules of Children

Report Summary

An issue of discussion at the initial and subsequent workgroup meetings has been deviation from the presumptive WSCSS Standard Calculation of support because of shared residential schedules for the children. RCW 26.19.075 allows for deviation if the child(ren) spend(s) a significant amount of time with the parent who is obligated to make a support transfer payment; the deviation does not result in insufficient funds in the receiving parent's household to meet the basic needs of the child(ren); and the child(ren) do(es) not receive public assistance.

This analysis is an attempt to present a more intensive review of this particular category of order deviations.

Using the existing sample data it was determined that 47 orders, or 19.9%, of the 236 orders with deviations were due to residential scheduling of the children.

The monthly net median incomes for NCPs and CPs with orders deviating for residential scheduling was found to be almost double the net median incomes of NCPs and CPs in the total order sample.

Orders that deviated for this reason resulted in a final child support obligation that was substantially less than the presumptive support amount calculated using the WSCSS.

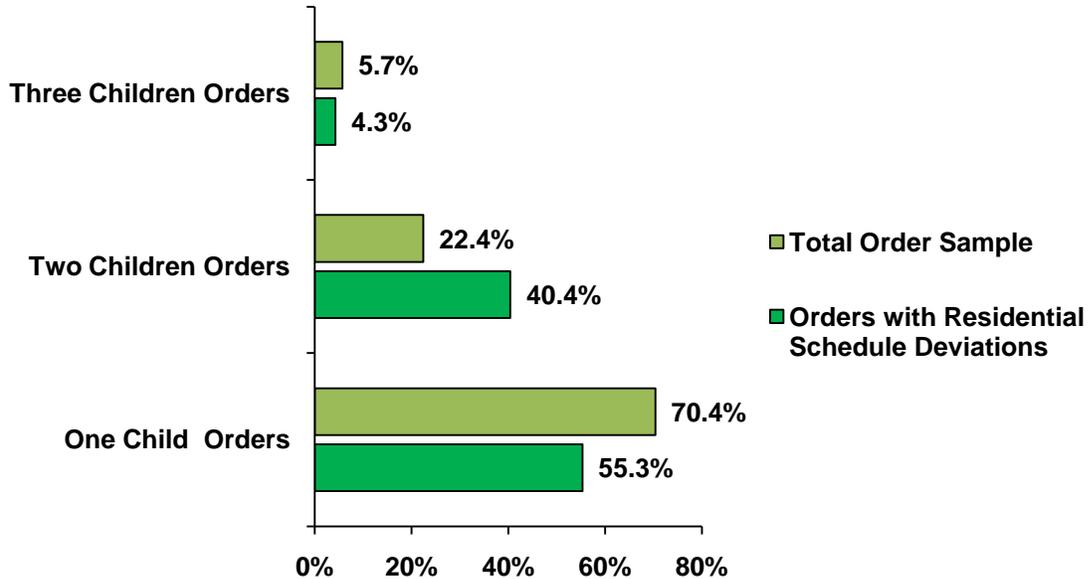
Almost 30% of orders deviating for residential scheduling of the children resulted in a support transfer amount of zero. These orders would account for a substantial portion of the measured differences between the median presumptive order amount and the final median support obligation in this subgroup.

This subgroup of orders contained only one administrative order. The majority (83%) of these orders were non-IV-D orders. All orders reviewed met the criteria of children not receiving public assistance at the time the order was entered.

Detailed Analysis of Orders Deviating for Residential Schedules of the Children

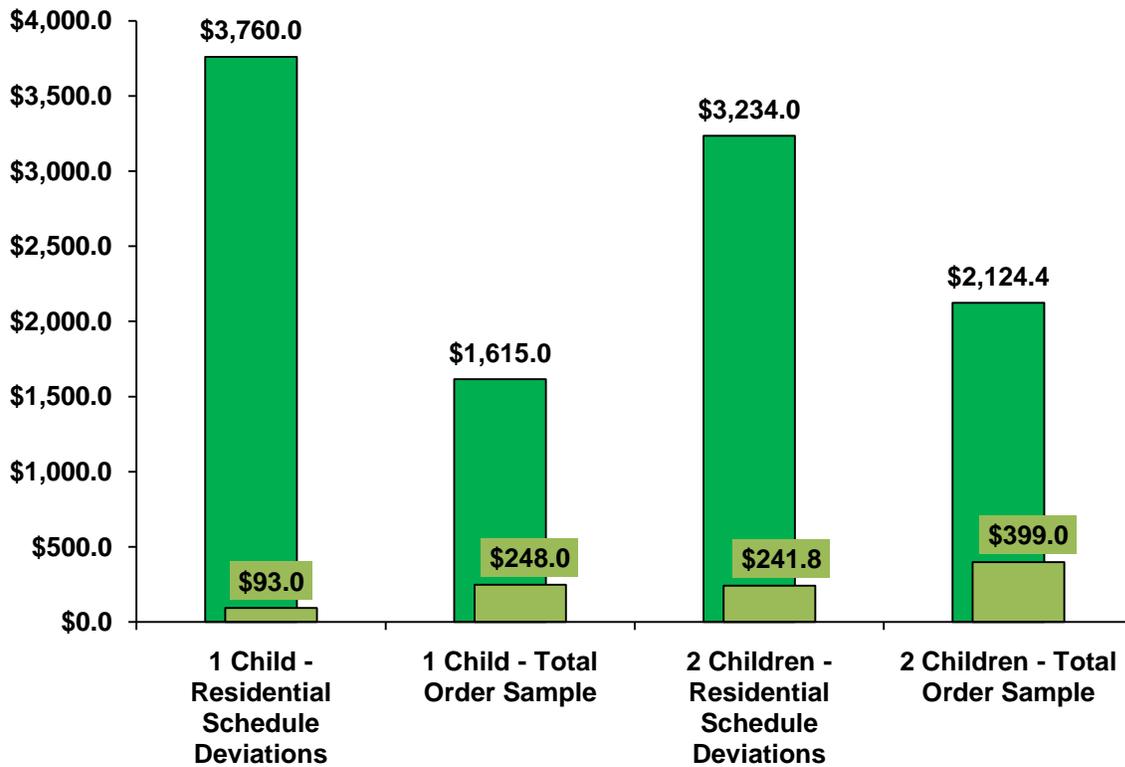
This review showed that 26 orders in this subgroup were established for one child, 19 orders were for two children, and 2 orders were for three children. None of these orders had more than three children. Figure 1 shows a comparison of numbers of children in this group of orders vs. the total sample.

Figure1. Number of Children in Orders with Residential Schedule Deviations vs. the Total Order Sample



The median amount of child support calculated as the Standard Transfer Payment for this subgroup of orders was \$643.63 per month and the median support transfer payment ordered was \$116.00 per month. The amount of difference between the median WSCSS standard calculation and the median transfer amount is clearly substantial for these order deviations. Figure 2 shows NCP incomes vs. number of children for the total original order sample compared to orders with residential schedule deviations. This subgroup of deviations contained only two orders with three children - one order with a transfer amount of \$500 per month and one order with a transfer amount of zero.

Figure 2. NCP Net Median Income by Number of Children – Orders with Residential Schedule Deviations vs. Total Order Sample



An obvious factor affecting the measured differences between presumptive support amounts and final child support obligations was the finding that 14 orders in this subgroup, or 29.8% of this type of deviation, resulted in a final support transfer amount of zero. Further review of these zero obligation orders showed approximately equal monthly net median incomes for the NCP and the CP (\$3,760 vs. \$3,723 per month respectively).

The monthly net median incomes of NCPs and CPs with orders deviating due to residential scheduling were almost twice the monthly net median incomes recorded for the total sample. Figure 3 provides a graphical comparison of the income levels for the two groups.

Figure 3. NCP and CP Net Median Income Comparison - Orders with Residential Schedule Deviations vs. Total Order Sample

