

Child Support Agency Case Closure Statistics

Data for June 2014 to December 2017

Quarterly

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Official
Experimental

Child maintenance is financial support between separated parents to help with the everyday costs of looking after children. The Child Support Agency (CSA) was set up in 1993 to calculate how much child maintenance parents should pay and if necessary to manage the payments between parents. In 2012 the Child Maintenance Service was created to replace the CSA. Cases managed by the CSA are being closed and parents are encouraged to arrange child maintenance themselves or to contact the Child Maintenance Service.

In June 2014, DWP began to close the cases managed by the CSA. As part of the closure process, parents are given the option to make their own family-based arrangements or to make an application with the Child Maintenance Service. This publication details the progress of closing the cases managed by the CSA.

Main stories as of December 2017

99% of cases which are eligible for Proactive Case Closure have started the closure process and **694,800 (89%) of these have ended their liability**

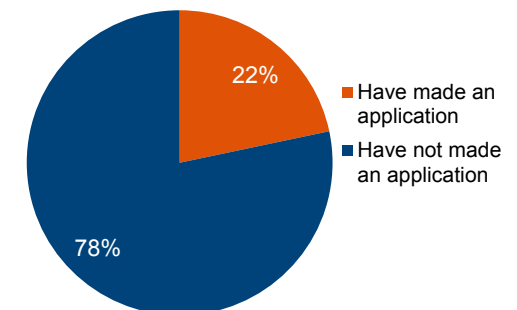
22% of proactive and reactive cases that have had their liability ended have applied to the Child Maintenance Service

Percentage (%) that have started the closure process



694,800

Cases have had their liability ended through the proactive Case Closure process



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Feedback is welcome.

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What you need to know

The Child Maintenance Service was introduced in 2012 to replace the Child Support Agency (CSA). In order to close the CSA we are contacting parents who have a **current liability** and encouraging parents to either make their own child maintenance arrangements or contact Child Maintenance Options for help in setting up a new child maintenance arrangement.

Cases are being closed in a structured process. All the cases managed by the CSA have been put into one of five segments based on their characteristics. This is known as **Proactive Case Closure**. The five segments are:

1. Nil Assessed Cases – Where the liability has been assessed as zero. Cases from this segment were selected from June 2014.
2. Non-Compliant Cases – Where the non-resident parent is not complying with their obligation to pay child maintenance or the case has been assessed but is not currently charging. This segment excludes cases which are subject to deduction from earnings orders, regular deduction order, where a deduction from earnings request has been granted and where enforcement action is ongoing. Cases from this segment were selected from January 2015.
3. Clerical Compliant Cases – Where the case is not managed on the main CSA computer systems and the case does not fall into segment 1, 2 or 5. These cases were selected from May 2015.
4. Compliant Cases – All non-clerical cases that do not fall into segments 1, 2 or 5. These cases were selected from May 2015.
5. Enforced Cases – Where Child Maintenance is paid by a deduction from earnings order/request or a regular deduction order or where an enforcement action is currently in progress. Enforcement actions are liability orders (and all subsequent action that flows from such orders), lump sum deduction orders, freezing orders, setting aside of disposition orders and their Scottish equivalents. These cases were selected from August 2016.

Some cases will not go through the Proactive Case Closure process:

1. When an application is made to the Child Maintenance Service which relates to a Paying Parent who has a live CSA case with a different Receiving Parent. The application to the Child Maintenance Service will trigger the process of ending the liabilities on the Paying Parent's existing CSA cases. This is called "**Reactive Case Closure**".
2. When the youngest child on the case will have reached the age of 20 before the 31st December 2018. The liability will not be ended on these cases because the cases will come to a natural end. These cases are called "**Age Out**".

Some cases managed by the CSA are **not eligible for case closure**. These cases may have already been cancelled or withdrawn.

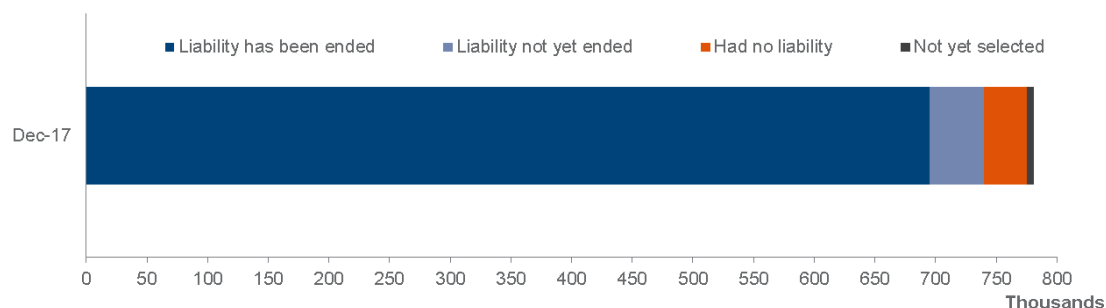
Case Closure process

Ending the liability on a CSA case is where the need to pay on-going child maintenance is stopped. It happens 6 months after the case has been selected for Proactive Case Closure and 38 days after a case has been selected for Reactive Case Closure. Once the liability has been ended on a CSA case, no further child maintenance is due but any unpaid maintenance will remain on the case. This does not mean that payments for the CSA case are no longer due, there is likely to be a final payment for on-going maintenance after the end liability date and payments towards arrears should continue until the case is fully closed.

Once the liability has been ended, parents are contacted about any arrears that might be on the case. After this the case is classed as **Closed** and has **completed the Case Closure process**.

99% of cases who are eligible for Proactive Case Closure have started the closure process and 89% of these have ended their liability.

The number of cases at each stage of the case closure process, at the end of December 2017



In December 2017, the total number of **cases which are still to be selected for the case closure process is 5,400**. This is down from 13,100 at the end of September 2017. This decrease is mostly due to the Case Closure process but some cases may have closed naturally, for example, the qualifying child may have left full-time non-advanced education and no longer qualify for child support payments. 35,800 cases of the cases selected had no liability but are linked to cases which did have a liability and are therefore part of the Case Closure process.

As of December 2017, 694,800 cases have had their **liability ended** through the **proactive CSA Case Closure process**. An additional 27,800 cases have had their liability ended through **Reactive Case Closure**. This leaves 44,900 proactive cases which have started the process but not yet reached the end of their CSA liability.

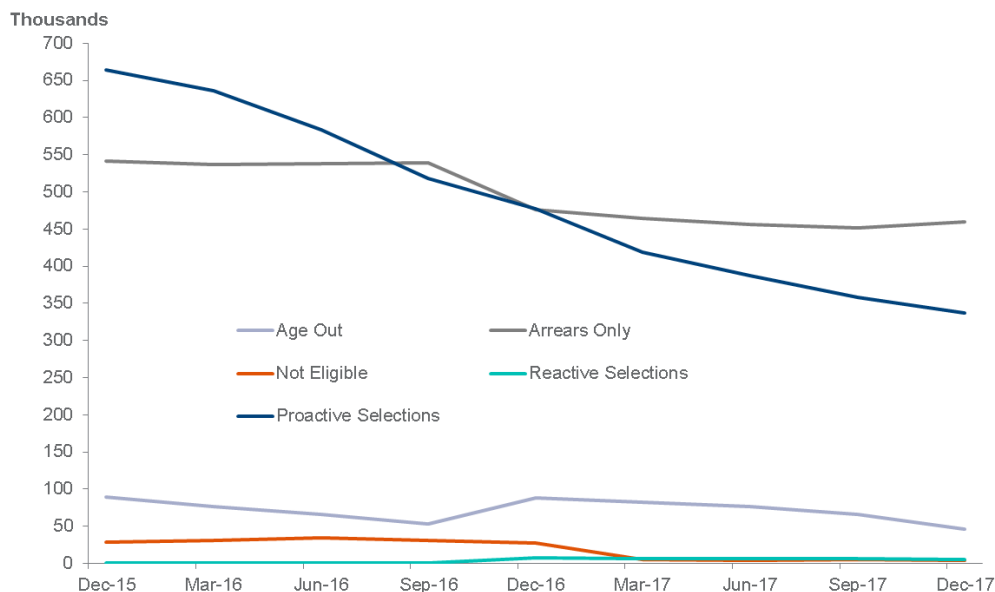
On the 30 November 2017 it was announced that all current CSA liabilities must be ended by the 31 December 2018. We are currently on track to meet this deadline. Parents who make an application to the Child Maintenance Service before their CSA liability ends will not have any break in their child maintenance liability. Their child maintenance liability will continue but the amount of child maintenance due and when it is to be paid may change. Parents can also arrange continuing payments themselves through a family-based arrangement.

A total of 459,600 CSA cases have been fully **closed** as a result of the Case Closure process, 430,500 **proactively** and 29,100 **reactively**. This is 57% of all cases going through the Case Closure process. See **Table 1.1** and **Tables 4.1 to 4.4** for full data.

CSA Caseload

The number of cases managed by the CSA has decreased to 866,700 from 1.53 million

The number of cases managed by the CSA, June 2014 to December 2017



The **CSA caseload** shows the number of cases still open with the CSA. It includes:

- Cases that have been selected and are in the process of having their liability ended.
- Cases that have not yet been selected for Case Closure.
- All cases which have ended liability but are not yet closed

Once a case is closed it is no longer counted in the caseload.

The majority of cases on the CSA are now **Arrears Only cases**. There are 459,400 Arrears Only cases at December 2017.

Proactive cases are consistently declining as they are being closed as part of the Case Closure process.

See **Tables 2.1 - 2.2** for full data.

More information on the Child Support Agency Caseload

The CSA caseload, reported in table 2.2, will differ from the figures reported for Case Closure in tables 3.1-3.3. The Case Closure position figures include cases that are no longer part of the CSA (because they have been closed) but were part of the Case Closure process.

Further details of the CSA caseload can be found in the Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary Statistics here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-support-agency-quarterly-summary-of-statistics-december-2017>

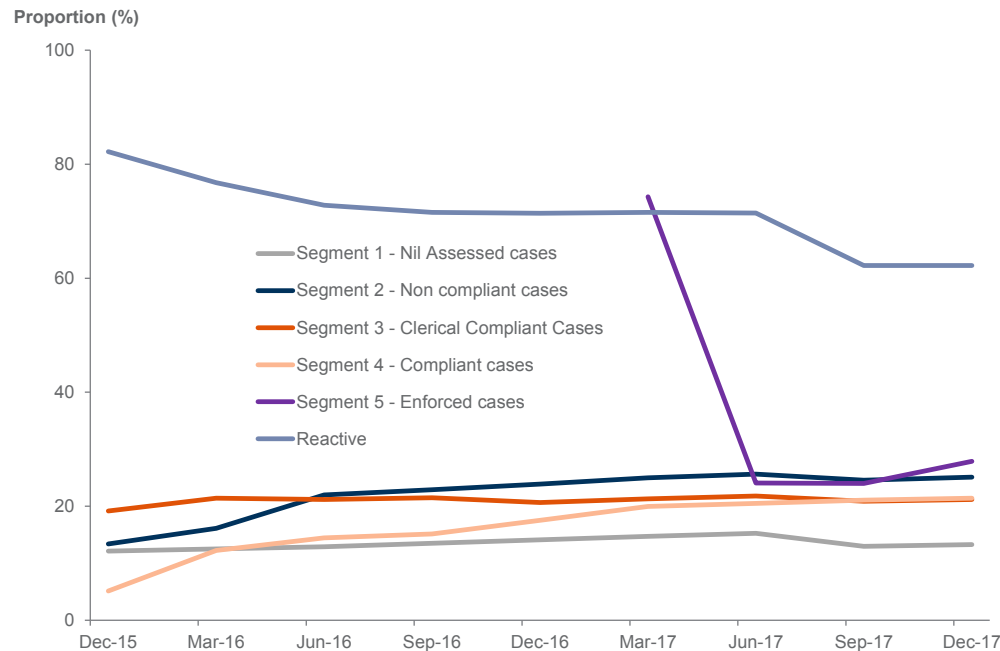
Applications to the Child Maintenance Service

Parents whose CSA cases are being closed may make their own child maintenance arrangements or contact Child Maintenance Options for help in setting up a new child maintenance arrangement with the Child Maintenance Service.

156,100 CSA cases that have had their liability ended have made an application to the Child Maintenance Service. These figures do not count “arrears only” cases where the parents have not made an application to the Child Maintenance Service but the arrears on their CSA case have been transferred to the Child Maintenance Service.

22% of all cases that have had their CSA liability ended by Case Closure have made an application to the Child Maintenance Service

The proportion of cases that have ended their CSA liability and made an application to the Child maintenance Service by Case Closure type and segment, December 2015 to December 2017



The percentage of cases that have had their liability ended and then made an application to the Child Maintenance Service has been fairly steady since June 2016 for segments 1 to 4.

Segment 5 cases began to be selected for the Case Closure process in March 2017. Only a small number of cases were initially selected so the percentage that then applied to the Child Maintenance Service fell as more Segment 5 cases were selected.

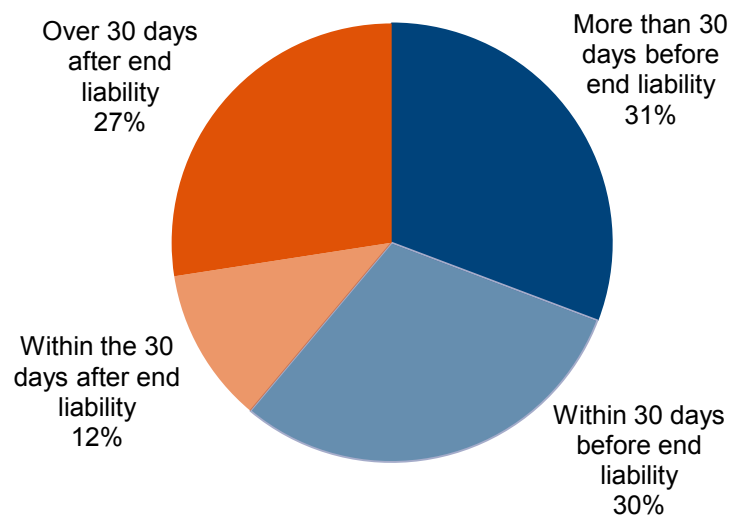
The proportion of **reactive cases** that made an application to the Child Maintenance Service has fallen in the last quarter. As the Case Closure process nears its end, the reactive closures will include more cases that were not in scope for Case Closure and are less likely to require on-going child maintenance. These cases are more likely to have been cancelled or withdrawn from the CSA or cases that would age-out if not drawn into reactive Case Closure.

See **Tables 5.1-5.2** and **Table 6** for full data.

Applications to the Child Maintenance Service (continued)

61 per cent of Child Maintenance Service applications from proactive Case Closure clients were made before their CSA liability had ended

Proportion of cases making an application to the Child Maintenance Service by their end of liability date, December 2017



As of December 2017, 138,800 CSA cases have had their liability ended through proactive Case Closure and made an **application to the Child Maintenance Service**.

Of these 138,800 cases, 84,800 (61%) made an application to the Child Maintenance Service before their CSA liability had ended.

A total of 15,900 cases (12%) made applications to the Child Maintenance Service in the month after their liability ended, and 38,100 (27%) made an application more than a month after their liability ended.

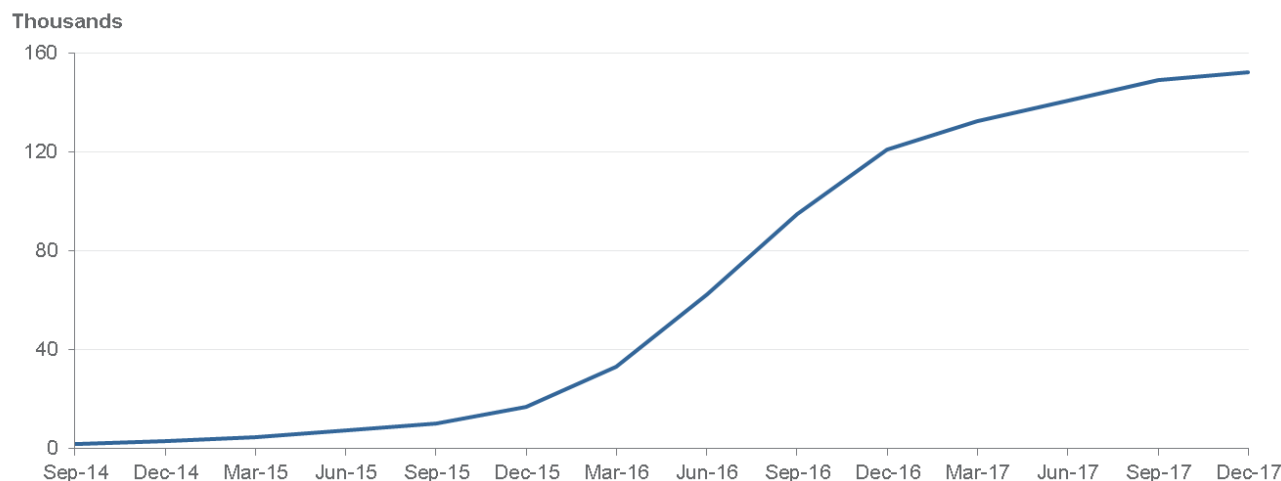
See **Tables 5.3-5.4** for full data.

CSA arrears only cases on the Child Maintenance Service

When cases that have arrears but no current liability to pay child maintenance are closed on the CSA, the CSA will discuss what the parents want to do about any arrears. The arrears can then be automatically moved to the Child Maintenance Service without anyone having to make an application to the Child Maintenance Service. This includes cases where the liability has been ended by the Case Closure process. More information on arrears only cases that have been transitioned to the Child Maintenance Service can be found in the ad-hoc statistical publication “Child Support Agency arrears transitioned to the Child Maintenance Service” here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-support-agency-arrears-transitioned-to-the-child-maintenance-service-system-november-2014-to-june-2017>

The Child Maintenance Service has 152,300 arrears only cases from clients who went through the Case Closure process

The volume of CSA arrears only cases on the Child Maintenance Service each month, September 2014 to December 2017



As of December 2017, there were 152,300 cases on the Child Maintenance Service which were **arrears only** cases on the CSA. This is a 2 percent increase from September 2017. The sharp increase from November 2015 was due to more cases beginning the case closure process, which in turn led to an increase in applications to the Child Maintenance Service. Since December 2016 the number of arrears only cases joining the Child Maintenance Service has slowed due to changes in the types of cases that were selected for the Case Closure process.

See **Tables 7 and 8** for full data.

About these statistics

Figures contained within this publication are rounded to the nearest hundred or percent. Percentages are calculated prior to rounding.

These statistics have been developed using guidelines set out by the UK Statistics Authority

Where to find out more

For more information on CSA Case Closure please see the “Child Maintenance: Ending Liability” publication here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-maintenance-ending-liability-scheme>

For more information regarding the performance of the Child Support Agency please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/child-support-agency-quarterly-summary-statistics--2>

For statistics on the performance of the Child Maintenance Service please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-the-2012-statutory-child-maintenance-scheme>.