

Child Maintenance Service 2012 Scheme Statistics

Data for August 2013 – September 2017

Quarterly

Published: 29 November 2017

Great Britain

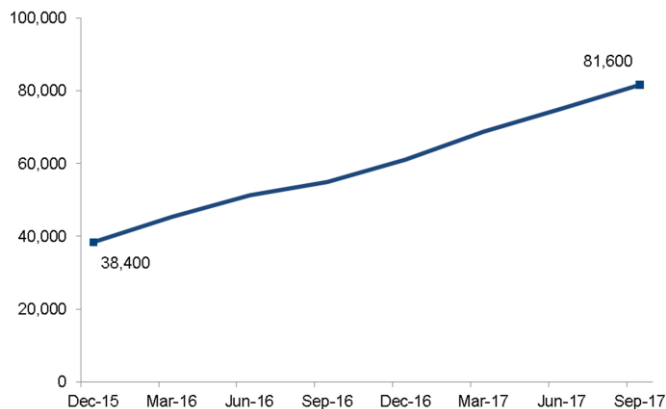
Official
Experimental

This publication contains information on cases being processed on the 2012 Statutory Child Maintenance Scheme, delivered by the Child Maintenance Service (CMS). It supports families who are unable to make arrangements themselves. It covers cases where CMS provides the maintenance calculation and the payment is made directly between the parents (Direct Pay) and cases where the CMS collects and forwards payments between parents and takes enforcement action if necessary (Collect and Pay).

Headlines

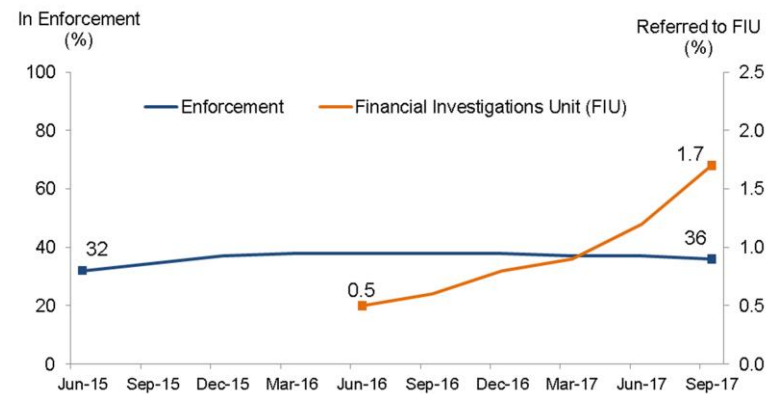
- In September 2017, 82,000 children were benefiting from a compliant Collect and Pay arrangement. This is 9% higher than the June 2017 figure. A further 343,000 were in families who had set up a Direct Pay arrangement.
- Over a third of parents who should be paying through a Collect and Pay arrangement are facing some form of enforcement.

Number of children benefiting from a compliant Collect and Pay arrangement



We expect this to continue to grow as the scheme matures.

Proportion of Collect and Pay parents referred to the Financial Investigations Unit and in Enforcement



Proportion of parents with a Collect and Pay arrangement facing enforcement appears to have levelled off. The proportion referred to the FIU continues to grow.

At a glance

Page

Number of cases managed on the CMS continues to increase.

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Number of referrals to Complex Earners Investigations has doubled in the last quarter.

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What you need to know

This publication contains information on cases being processed on the 2012 statutory child maintenance scheme, delivered by the Child Maintenance Service. The data covers the period of August 2013 to September 2017.

This scheme started in 2012 and is yet to mature therefore there is a natural growth in associated volumes reported.

These statistics are still being developed and assured. They have therefore been classified as experimental as we continue to assure and approve our methodology. They may be revised in future editions.

The [publication strategy for the 2012 Scheme](#) was first published on 26 February 2014 and last updated on 30 November 2016.

Author: Olatunde Akinlade

Lead Statistician: Aniel Anand

cm.analysis.research@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

DWP Press Office: 0203 267 5129

Comments? Feedback is welcome

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Changes in this Publication

This publication contains some changes as well as new measures. New measures include:

- We have developed a new dataset on enforcement which enables us to provide new measures on Enforcement in **Table 12**.
- Figures are now provided on a quarterly rather than monthly basis in the tables, reflecting the quarterly publication schedule.
- The publication has been streamlined to focus on headline messages. Some terminology has been simplified to be more user-friendly.

Changes to Future Publications

Information on the 2012 scheme continues to be developed and tested. Additional measures will be included in future publications when DWP statisticians are assured of the quality of the data, in line with the [publication strategy](#).

Upcoming Releases

The next release of Experimental Statistics on the CMS will contain data up to December 2017 and will be published in February 2018.

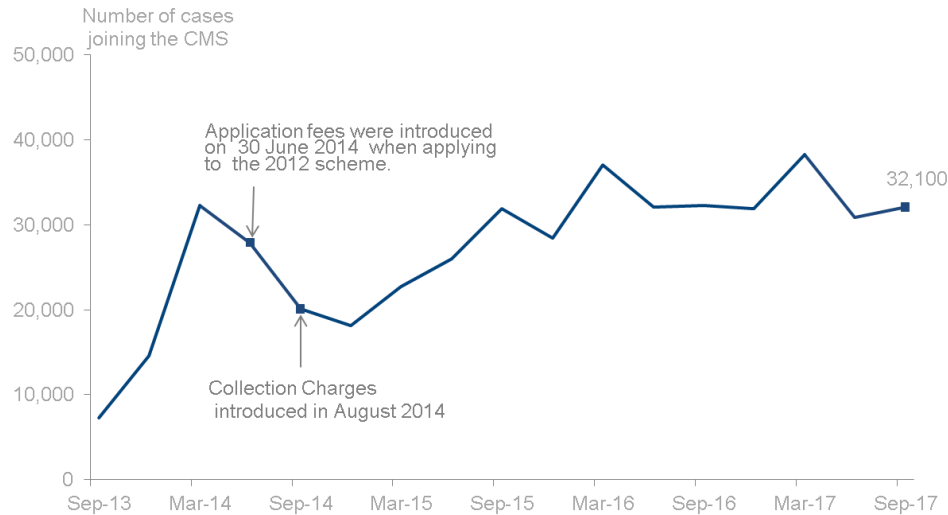
Regional Tables are provided in further supplementary tables.

Methodology and Definitions are available in a supplementary [document](#).

Intake and caseload

Number of cases managed on CMS has increased by 7% since June 2017

Number of new cases joining CMS from September 2013 to September 2017



Main Findings

The number of new cases joining the CMS has remained roughly constant since December 2015, with 32,100 new cases joining in the three months to September 2017. Figures before then were lower as there were fewer cases joining CMS after their CSA case was closed.

The closure of CSA cases with a liability is now nearly complete and so we would expect the number of new cases to begin to eventually reduce.

The total number of cases managed on the CMS has increased by 25,700 or 7% since June 2017.

See [Table 1](#) for full data on new cases joining and [Table 4](#) for total number of cases managed on the system.

Application Fee Exemption

At most, 38% of applications were exempt from fees in the quarter ending September 2017

Main Findings

The proportion of new cases which were exempted from Application Fees in the quarter ending September 2017 was 38% of new cases joining the CMS. This figure has been impacted by a number of cases erroneously marked as having an exemption due to domestic violence or abuse due to known issues with the payment system on a number of occasions. This is being investigated. In the meantime, please treat this as an upper bound.

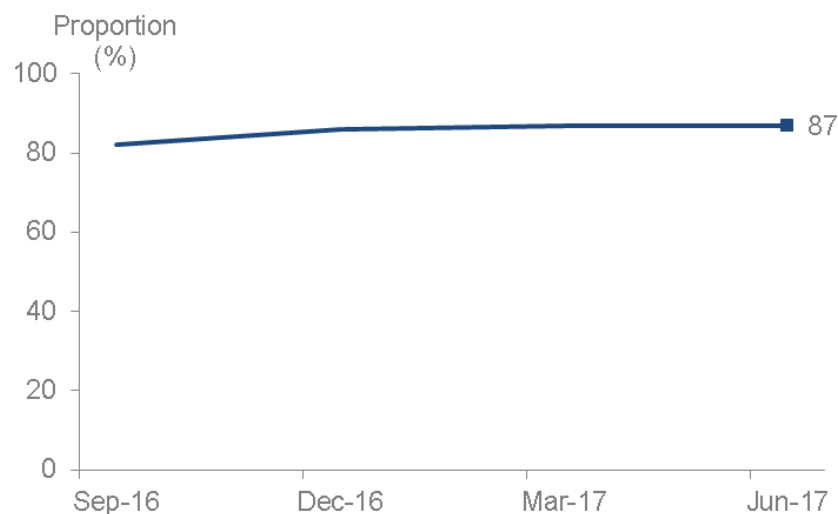
Exemptions from the £20 application fee are available for those who have suffered domestic violence or abuse and who have declared this to an approved body, and for applicants under 19. Over 99% of exemptions were due to domestic violence or abuse.

See [Table 2](#) for full data.

Time to clear New Applications

87% of new cases applying to the CMS in the quarter ending June 2017 were cleared within 12 weeks

Proportion of New Applications Cleared - September 2016 to July 2017



Main Findings

In the quarter ending June 2017, **87%** of new case applications received were cleared within 12 weeks. This proportion has levelled off since the beginning of the year.

Figures are affected in some cases because the new application is linked to a CSA case which is going through the CSA case closure process. Such applications take a longer period to clear. **90%** of cases without such a link were cleared within 12 weeks.

In the quarter to June 2017, **82%** of changes in circumstance for CMS cases were cleared within 28 days. The proportion has continued to decline as the caseload grows.

Further breakdowns of application volumes and time taken to clear them are provided in **Table 3** and changes in circumstance are in **Table 13**.

Compliance and beneficiaries

Parents are encouraged to make Family Based Arrangements where they can do so. Where parents are not ready or able to make their own arrangement, the statutory scheme remains available and the Direct Pay option enables parents to avoid collection charges by arranging payments between themselves. Collect and Pay arrangements are available for those parents where a collaborative arrangement is not possible or where the paying parent is not meeting their obligations. This means the Collect and Pay arrangements cover those parents who it is most difficult to collect payments from.

In September 2017, **31%** of paying parents using the statutory service used Collect and Pay, and **71%** used Direct Pay. About **2%** of paying parents use both types of arrangements. See **Table 7** for historical splits of payment arrangements by paying parents.

In the quarter to September 2017, **57%** of paying parents on Collect and Pay were compliant, contributing towards their liability in the previous three months. These parents paid **51%** of cash due and the arrangements benefited **82,000** children. These proportions have remained relatively stable over time. **Tables 8** and **9** give more details and an interactive dashboard of the Child Maintenance Scheme statistics by region can be found [online](#) at **our Data Visualisation dashboard**.

In September 2017, 343,000 children were in families who had set up a Direct Pay arrangement. A total of 424,000 children were covered by a Direct Pay or a compliant Collect and Pay arrangement.

See **Table 5** for full data.

Unpaid Maintenance and Cumulative Maintenance

Cumulative maintenance arranged and unpaid over the lifetime of the scheme - March 2015 to September 2017

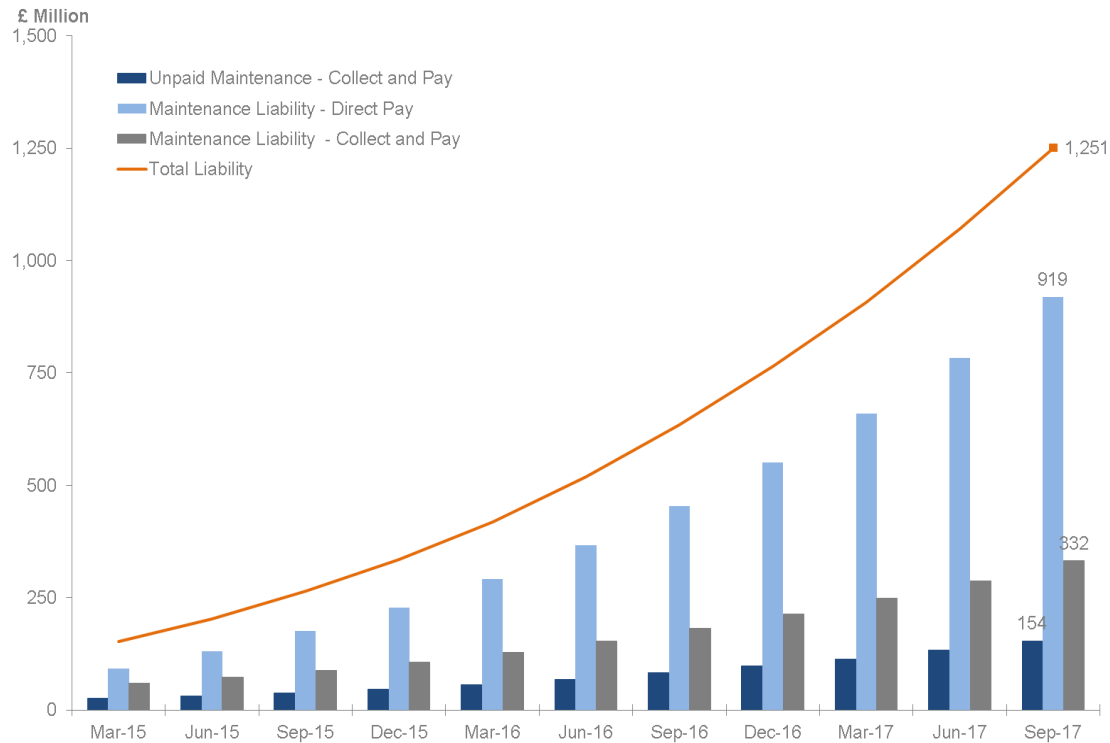
Main Findings

Over the whole lifetime of the 2012 scheme, a total of **£1.25bn** maintenance has been arranged with paying parents. Of this **£919m** (73%) relates to parents on Direct Pay, and **£332m** to parents on Collect and Pay. These figures are cumulative.

As at September 2017, there was **£154m** unpaid maintenance relating to Collect and Pay cases (though some of these may have built up from cases that were on Direct Pay arrangements that have subsequently transferred on to Collect and Pay).

The value of maintenance arranged with paying parents on Direct Pay and Collect and Pay will continue to increase as the number of cases and their time on the CMS increases.

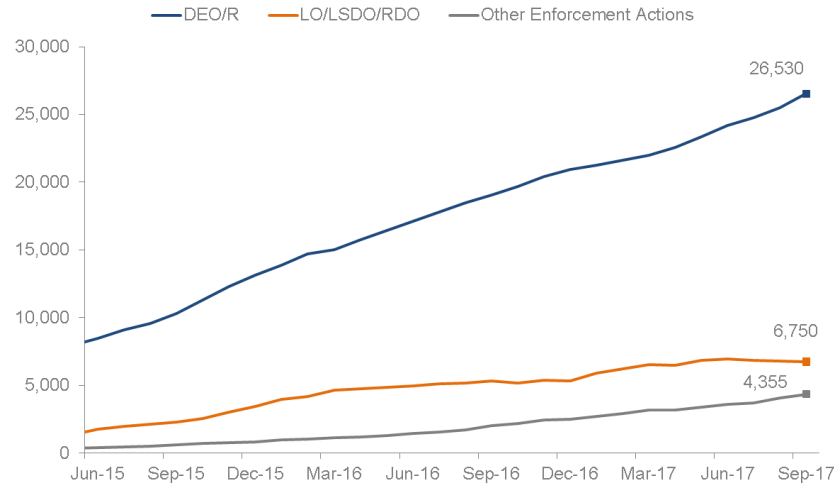
See **Table 11** for full data.



Enforcement

Over a third of parents with a Collect and Pay arrangement are facing some form of enforcement.

Enforcement Actions - June 2015 to September 2017



Main Findings

The CMS has a range of strong collection and enforcement powers to ensure paying parents pay what they owe. These powers range from deducting maintenance directly from earnings or from bank accounts, to instructing enforcement agents to collect unpaid maintenance or seize goods, to, in extreme cases, prison sentences.

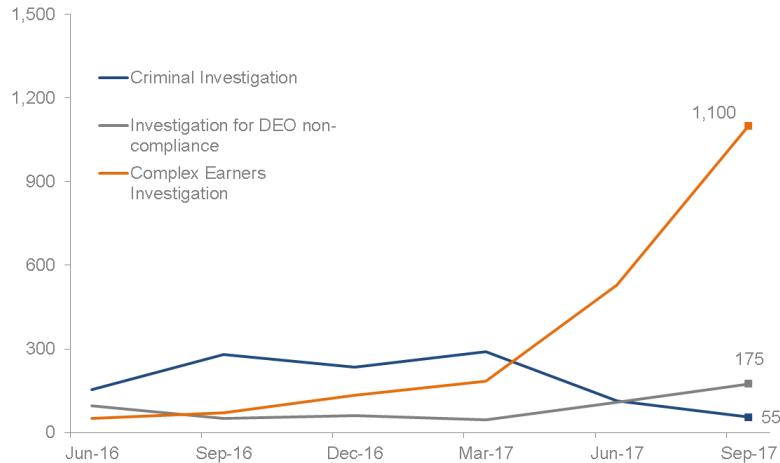
In September 2017, **26,530** paying parents with a collect and pay arrangement had a deduction from earnings order or deduction from earnings request in place (DEO/R). In addition, there were **6,750** Liability Orders (LO), Lump Sum Deduction Orders (LSDO) and Regular Deduction Orders (RDO) process and a further **4,355** enforcement actions were ongoing.

Overall, **34,655** Collect and Pay paying parents with ongoing maintenance had one or more Deduction from Earnings Order or Deduction from Earnings Request or other enforcement action in process. This was **36%** of the Collect and Pay population.

Financial Investigations

There has been an upward trend in the number parents referred for Financial Investigations.

Paying parents referred to the Financial Investigations Unit - June 2016 to September 2017



Main Findings

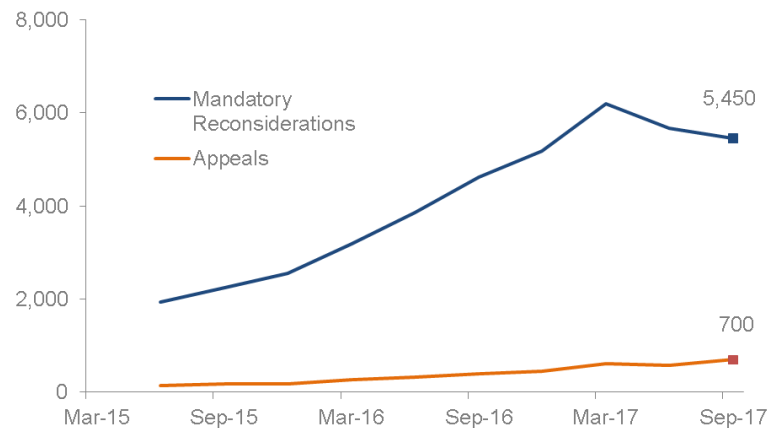
The total number of cases referred for financial investigations on the CMS in the quarter ending September 2017 was **1,330** or **76%** higher than for the quarter ending June 2017. The increase is mainly due to the number of cases referred for Complex Earners investigations which have more than doubled to **1,100** in the past quarter.

Since 1st March 2017 guidance to child maintenance service case workers changed so that most of these complex earners are referred directly to the Financial Investigations Unit (FIU) to consider an investigation. This is reflected in the sharp increase in number of cases the FIU have investigated.

For a full breakdown of Financial Investigations Unit actions see **Table 12** in the supplementary tables.

Appeals and Mandatory Reconsiderations

Mandatory Reconsiderations and Appeals received – June 2015 to September 2017



Main Findings

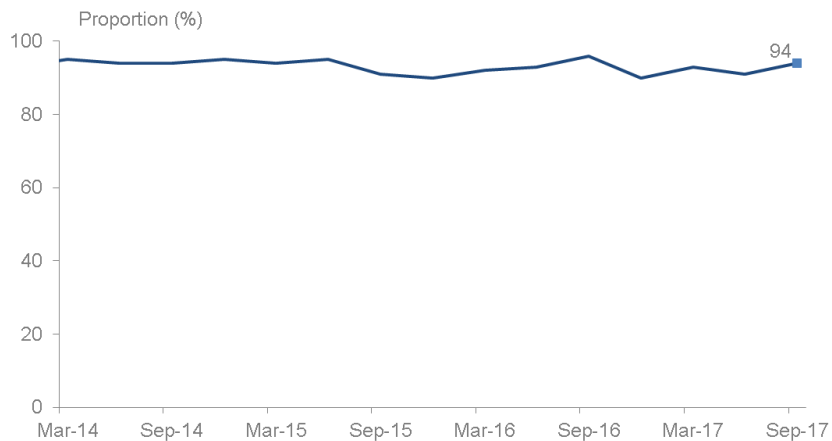
When parents wish to dispute a decision they are first required to ask the CMS to revise the decision through a Mandatory Reconsideration, and if they still disagree with the decision they may appeal to the Tribunal Service. In the quarter to September 2017, **5,450** Mandatory Reconsiderations were received. Previously Mandatory Reconsiderations were increasing as the volume of cases on the CMS increased and so the volume of changes of circumstances grew. Since March 2017, Mandatory Reconsiderations have been going down.

In the quarter ending September 2017, **700** Appeals were received and **435** were cleared. The volume of appeals cleared has increased recently because HMCTS have been clearing the backlog of CMS appeals.

Table 14 provides information on Mandatory Reconsiderations and **Table 15** provides full details on Appeals received and their outcomes.

Service Standards

Accuracy Levels – March 2014 to September 2017



Main Findings

In month **Accuracy** stands at **94%** in the quarter ending September 2017, which is an increase of 3 percentage points from the quarter ending June 2017.

Accuracy is defined as the proportion of cases that are accurate to within £1 or 2% of the correct calculation based on the latest assessment at the point of selection. See **Table 17** for full details

645 complaints were received in the quarter ending September 2017, a decrease from **760** in the quarter ending June 2017. See **Table 16** for full details.

About These Statistics

The 2012 Scheme has replaced the 1993 and 2003 Schemes administered by the Child Support Agency (CSA), and historic cases are in the process of being closed.

Comparisons should not be made to previous Schemes because of the different objectives of the 2012 Scheme. The reforms to the child maintenance system are to place emphasis on supporting parents to set up collaborative, family-based child maintenance arrangements, so that the statutory Scheme is no longer the default option.

Figures contained within this publication are subject to rounding. Percentages shown are calculated prior to rounding. Please see the background and methodology document for details.

Where to find out more

Older releases can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-the-2012-statutory-child-maintenance-scheme>

The background and methodology document can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-maintenance-service-2012-scheme-experimental-statistics-background-information-and-methodology>

The 1993 and 2003 Scheme statistics can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/child-support-agency-quarterly-summary-statistics--2>

Feedback Welcome

The Department for Work and Pensions is always glad to hear the comments and views of customers on the 2012 Experimental Statistics. Please email cm.analysis.research@dpw.gsi.gov.uk. We are developing these statistics over the next several releases.