

March 5, 2001

Dear Financial Institution:

The Montana Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED) is pleased to announce the implementation of the financial institution data match (FIDM) which has been in the works for several years. The groundwork for this project was laid through a cooperative effort of the financial industry, data processors and child support agencies at the national level. Considerable effort went into designing a simple and efficient data match approach. Locally, the financial industry was active in drafting legislation to create Montana's FIDM process.

As you may recall, the financial institution data match is one provision of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) passed by Congress in 1996. Under the Act, states are required to enter into agreements with financial institutions doing business in their state to perform quarterly data matches to locate assets of parents with child support delinquencies and to levy on those assets when appropriate. In Montana, FIDM legislation was enacted in 1997 (MCA 40-5-924).

Montana law allows financial institutions to charge the CSED a fee for performing the quarterly data match. To claim reimbursement, financial institutions must document their costs for conducting the match and submit the cost justification to the CSED for approval. (Child support agencies in other states report that many of their financial institutions are not charging for this service since they find the cost to be nominal or their data processors are not charging them for performing the match.)

Under state and federal law, financial institutions cannot be held liable for release of financial records to state child support enforcement agencies conducting data matches. For additional information regarding these statutes, visit our FIDM website at <http://fidm.statedatamatch.com> or search for "FIDM" on the financial industry website www.privacyheadquarters.com. The latter site addresses concerns specific to the Gramm - Leach - Bliley Act.

The CSED is working with a 15-state consortium (the Alliance) to develop and implement the FIDM program. The Alliance has contracted with Informatix, Inc. to perform the data match. Informatix will also be active in the CSED's outreach activities to financial institutions. Additionally, the CSED has been working closely with the Montana Bankers Association, the Montana Independent Bankers and the Montana Credit Union Network to introduce FIDM in Montana.

Enclosed are four items: the agreement between the financial institution and the CSED, an election form (Attachment A), the Financial Data Specifications Handbook, and a FIDM brochure.

The agreement outlines the purpose and terms of the data match. The election form allows individual financial institutions to select the terms of their electronic data exchange. Note that a data processor may be designated as the contact for this process and that the terms of the exchange may be changed by submitting a revised election form.

The Handbook defines the data elements that need to be exchanged in the interface. It should be shared with your data processor as soon as possible to assist in preparing for the data match.

The brochure provides general information about the FIDM program and processes. It also contains information about the hotline where your data processor can receive help with FIDM technical issues and the website where you may obtain additional information and download forms.

Please complete the agreement and election form and return them to the following address:

**Child Support Enforcement Division
FIDM Program
Attn: Lynnette Curtis
PO Box 202943
Helena, MT 59620-2943**

All data and match results, including tapes or other media, are to be sent to the CSED's agent at the following address:

**Informatix, Inc.
FIDM Operations
5913 Executive Dr.
North Tower
Lansing, MI 48911**

We appreciate your involvement in this worthwhile cause and look forward to the successful implementation of a process that will benefit the children of Montana. If you have questions, please contact Lynnette Curtis at the above address or at 406 / 444-2831 (phone), 406 / 444-1370 (fax) or lcurtis@state.mt.us (email).

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Wellbank, Administrator
Montana Child Support Enforcement Division

Enclosures