

BRITISH COLUMBIA FAMILY MAINTENANCE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

2014-2015



May
2015

2014 – 2015 Annual Report



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Contents

FOREWORD	1
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2014-2015 YEAR.....	2
FMEP CASES	3
OVERVIEW.....	3
FAMILY SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT CASES.....	3
GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF CASES.....	4
ASSIGNED CASELOAD.....	5
PREVIOUSLY ASSIGNED CASELOAD	7
INTERNATIONAL CASELOAD – UNITED STATES.....	9
INTERNATIONAL CASELOAD – OTHER COUNTRIES.....	10
GOVERNMENT FEE CASES.....	10
FMEP CLIENTS.....	11
RECIPIENTS.....	13
PAYORS	13
PAYORS IN RECEIPT OF INCOME ASSISTANCE.....	15
COLLECTIONS ON ASSIGNED CASES.....	15
INTEREST	16
COLLECTIONS ON RECIPROCAL CASES.....	16
COLLECTION RATES AND ARREARS.....	17
PAYMENTS TO CLIENTS NO LONGER IN RECEIPT OF INCOME ASSISTANCE.....	18
CHILD SUPPORT ORDERS	18
FEES RECOVERED FOR GOVERNMENT.....	19
FAMILY SUPPORT OUTCOMES.....	19
PROGRAM OPERATIONS	20
ENROLMENT	20
PAYMENT PROCESSING	21
ENFORCEMENT	22
ADMINISTRATIVE ENFORCEMENT	22
COURT ENFORCEMENT.....	22
CLIENT SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS	23
INFOLINE.....	23
FMEP WEBSITE	24
FMEP CALL CENTRES	25
OUTREACH AND THE COMPREHENSIVE CHILD SUPPORT SERVICE (CCSS)	25

CLIENT SERVICE AND COMPLAINTS 26

..... 27

PROGRAM INITIATIVES 27

STAFF AND PROGRAM COSTS..... 27

OUTLOOK FOR 2015 – 2016..... 28

FOREWORD

Over 41,000 families enrolled in the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program sought assistance in obtaining child and spousal support. For the vast majority, the program was able to recover some or all of the payments that were due within the 2014/15 fiscal year. The pattern of previous years was repeated, with a slight drop in enrolment and an increase in total payments. Over \$210 million was disbursed to families throughout British Columbia, as well as to families elsewhere in Canada or living in one of the countries that British Columbia shares reciprocity with.

The annual report this year gives a breakdown on those cases where parents live in different provinces or countries (see Page 8). Alberta is British Columbia's largest Canadian partner in terms of enforcement cases. By combining information and using best practices, the flow of support payments is strong, to the benefit of families on both sides of the border.

British Columbia works with a number of international partners to ensure that support obligations are made when parents are living in different countries. The United States has the majority of international cases with British Columbia, and Washington State is our largest service partner. Last year, more than \$769,332 flowed across our respective international borders.

The report also gives us a picture on the ages of children who benefit from the program. Many people believe that child support ends at the age of majority, and for some it does. But in an increasing number, support can continue for young adults as they complete their education. The numbers are set out on Page 12 for reference. Overall, about four percent of British Columbia's population up to and including age 24, benefit from FMEP services. Most of these people live in the largest centres, although the services reach throughout the province.

The results that have benefitted many families would not be achieved without dedicated staff and our partner agencies and businesses that help us every day. We thank them all for a job well done.

Chris Beresford
Director of Maintenance Enforcement

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2014-2015 YEAR

Highlights for the year include:

- Between April 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015 the FMEP total caseload dropped by 763 cases (or 1.77 percent). However, collections for the year increased by \$1,749,410, for a record high of \$210,294,373.
- As of March 31, 2015, 41,503 families were enrolled with the FMEP and the program provided support for over 60,000 children in 2014-2015. Close to one in 20 children between the ages of 10 and 19 in British Columbia are receiving child support through the FMEP.
- 2014-2015 was a record year for maintenance collections, despite a continued reduction in the number of cases enrolled with the FMEP.
- The average amount of support ordered by the courts increased approximately five percent.
- Collections from cases involving a parent in an international jurisdiction increased by 57% percent, for a record high of \$907,712.
- In Canada, Alberta remains the largest overall reciprocal maintenance partner for British Columbia. Together we share over 4,100 cases – and in 2014-2015 just under \$18.0 million was collected on those cases.

FMEP CASES

This section provides an overview of the FMEP caseload. Included are the number of cases enrolled and where those cases are located. This section further breaks down cases by:

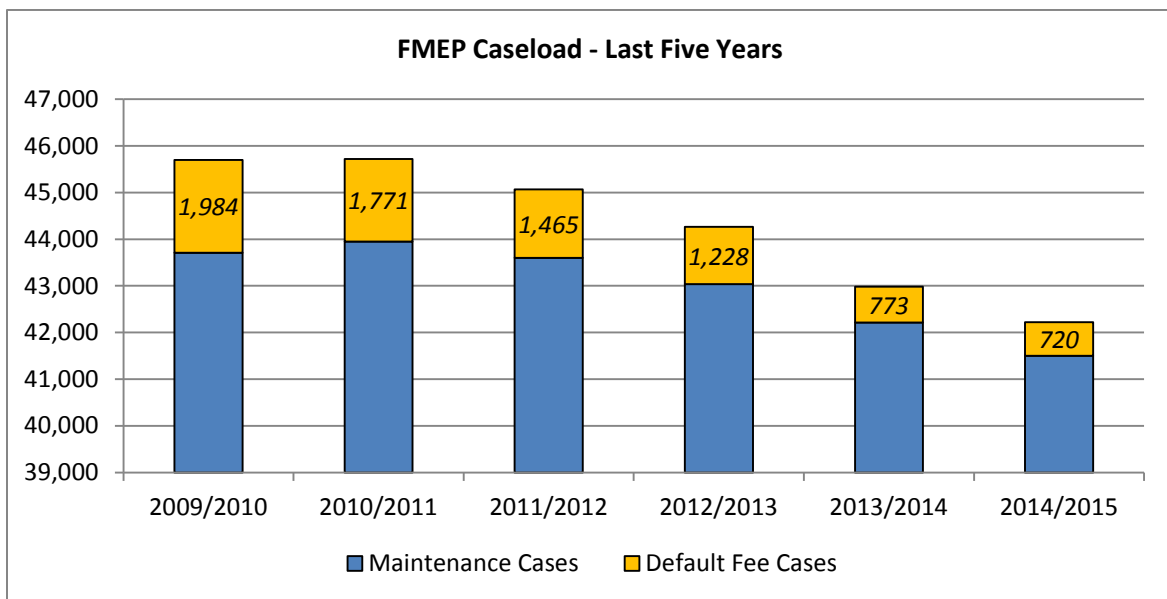
- parents who receive income assistance;
- parents who reside outside of British Columbia;
- and whether the cases are government fee-only cases.

OVERVIEW

When looking at caseloads retrospectively, the FMEP caseload has generally remained stable. For many years, the primary reduction in the total caseload was related to the reduction in government fee cases.

However, over the past five years a small but noticeable trend has emerged, representing a decrease in both maintenance cases and default fee cases as illustrated in the chart below.

The FMEP finished the 2014-2015 year with 41,503 maintenance cases and 701 default fee cases, an overall decrease of 1.8 percent over the previous year, and a drop of 7.8 percent over the five-year period.



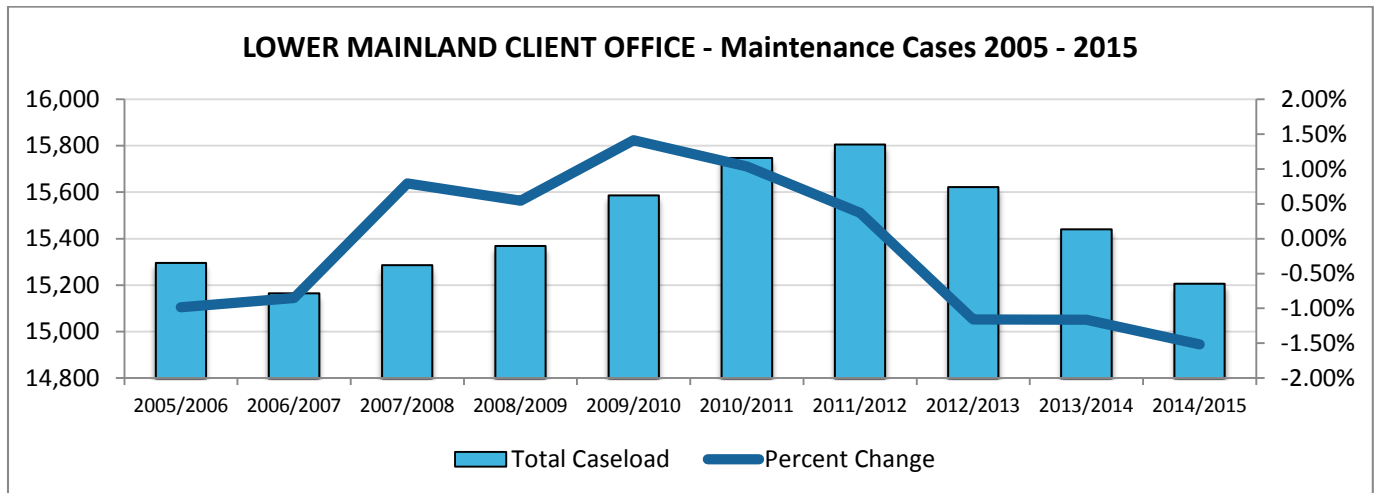
FAMILY SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT CASES

There are two types of enforcement cases, maintenance cases and government cases. Maintenance cases are those which the FMEP is enforcing child or spousal maintenance, also known as “family support”. Government cases are those in which the FMEP is collecting on government penalty issued to a maintenance payor. The majority of cases (98 percent) in the FMEP caseload are family support cases. This caseload has been dropping slowly, from a high of 46,389 in 2001-2002 to 41,503 at March 31, 2015. This was the fourth consecutive year where the numbers of withdrawn cases exceeded the number of new and re-enrolled cases.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF CASES

The FMEP operates out of three regional offices, the Lower Mainland Client Office, the Victoria Client Office and the Northern and Interior Client Office. Generally, cases are managed in the office that is closest the courthouse where the maintenance order or agreement is filed.

As of March 31, 2015, the Lower Mainland Client Office served 15,206 families in the Greater Vancouver Regional District and the Fraser Valley areas. This is approximately 37 percent of the total families enrolled in the program. This is the third consecutive year that caseloads in this office have declined.



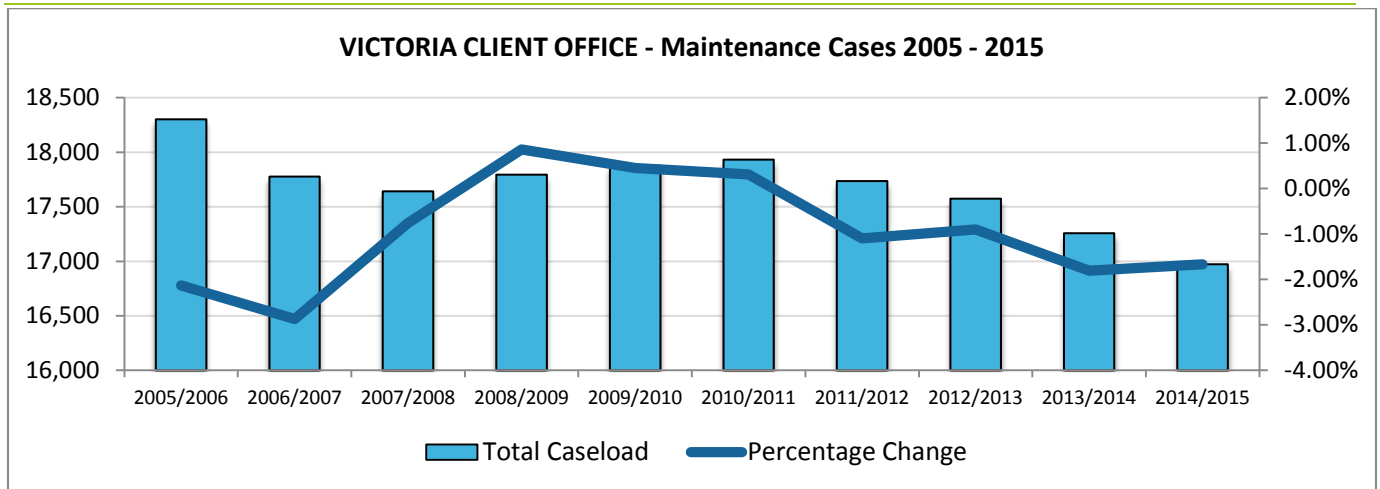
The principal reduction in the caseload in the Lower Mainland occurred in the assigned caseload¹. The assigned caseload dropped by 8.45 percent last year. In contrast, the non-assigned caseload saw a decrease of less than one percent (-0.54 percent).

The Victoria Client Office is the largest office in the FMEP with 40.9 percent of enrolled cases. This office manages cases where both parents live in British Columbia, as well as cases where one parent lives outside British Columbia (inter-jurisdictional cases). At the end of 2014-2015, the Victoria office managed 16,971 family support cases. This office saw a slight decline of 1.66 percent over the previous year.

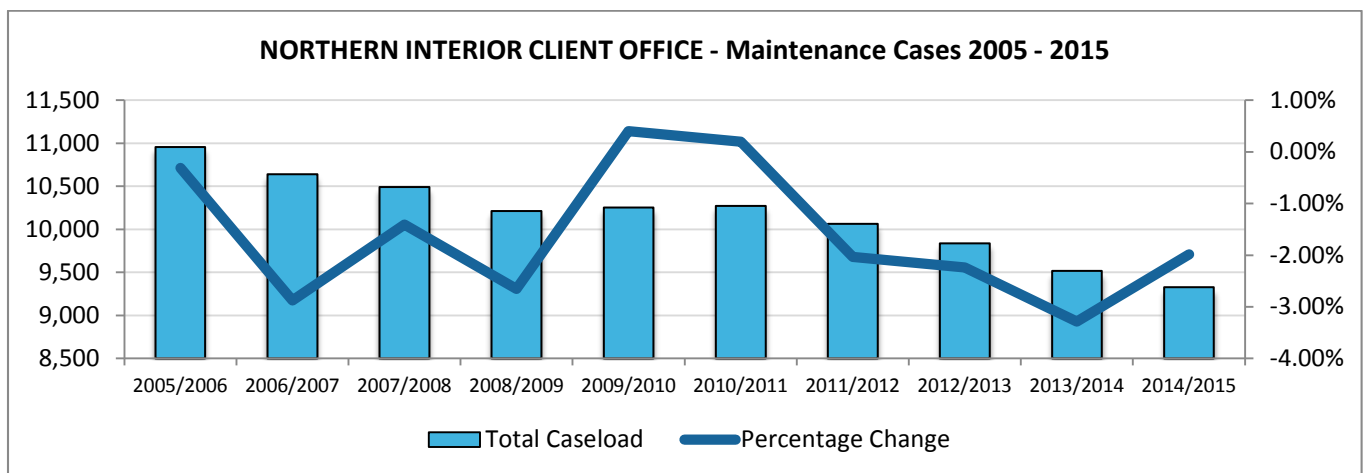
Like the Lower Mainland Client Office, the decline in the Victoria office was primarily focused in the assigned caseload. This caseload saw a reduction of over 10.28 percent; whereas the non-assigned caseload saw a decline of just 0.34 percent.

The overall numbers can be seen in the following chart.

¹ The assigned caseload is the group of cases where the recipient (usually the custodial parent) is in receipt of income assistance benefits from the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation.



The Northern and Interior Client Office serves the areas north of the Lower Mainland and the interior of the province. The chart below shows the overall caseload trends for the past decade.



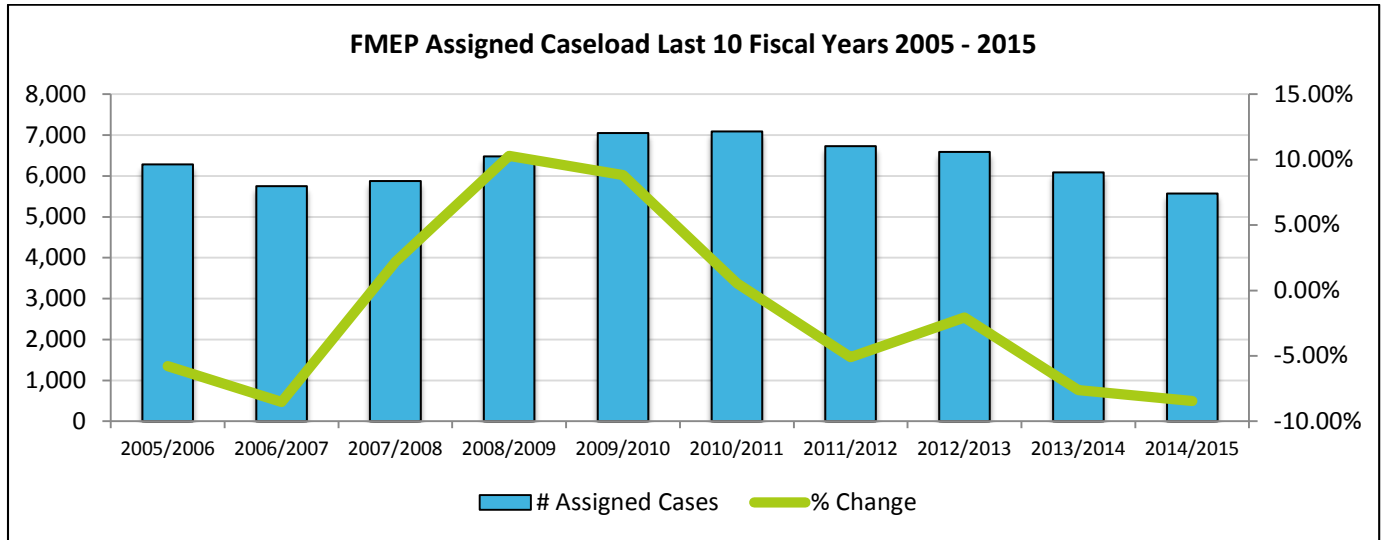
The overall caseload in the Northern and Interior Client Office has declined in eight of the past ten years. This has led to an average annualized loss of 4.16 percent since 2005. As with the other client offices, the largest change was in the assignment caseload, showing a decline of 13.6 percent this year. However, the non-assigned cases remained fairly stable with only a 0.02 percent decline. These two caseloads combined yielded a total decline of 1.99 percent for this office in 2014-2015.

ASSIGNED CASELOAD

Assigned cases differ from other FMEP cases. As a condition of receiving income assistance, the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation requires all recipients to enrol their maintenance order with the FMEP. Enrolment in the FMEP by all other maintenance recipients is voluntary.

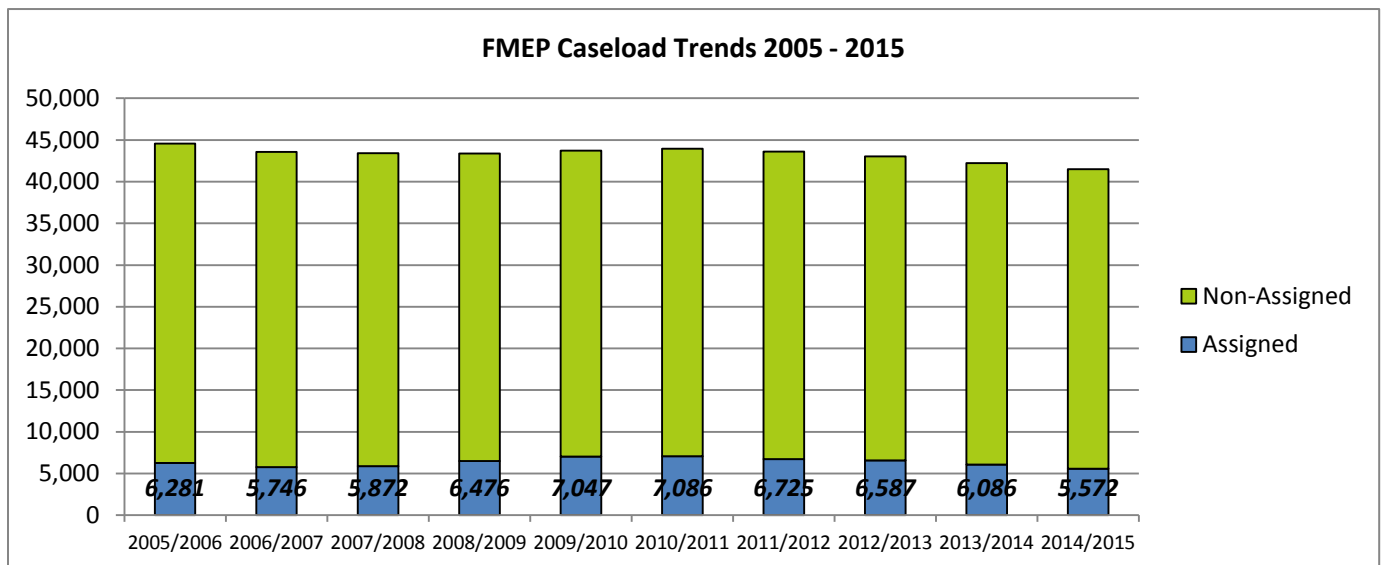
Over the past decade, the assigned caseload has fluctuated. The assigned caseload saw a small increase during the recession between 2007 and 2010. However, after this period the assigned caseload started to diminish; resulting in an average net loss of 1.56 percent per year since the 2005-2006 fiscal period. In 2014-2015 the assigned caseload dropped more quickly, by 8.5 percent, a reduction of more than 500 cases.

These trends are shown below in the accompanying chart.



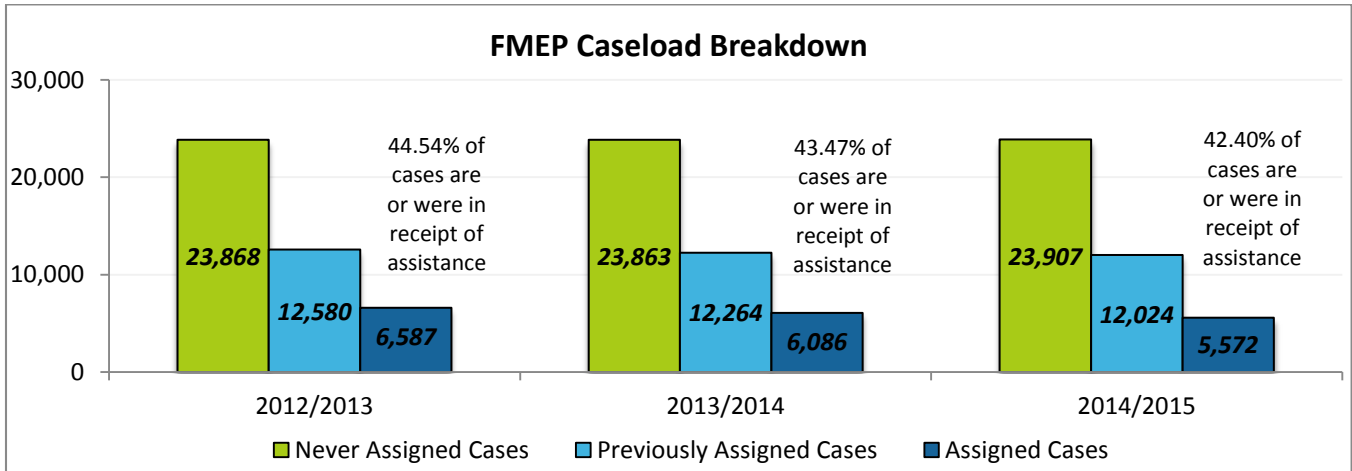
A recipient no longer requiring income assistance can choose to remain enrolled in the FMEP. A recipient who remains enrolled will change from the assigned caseload to the non-assigned, or “voluntary” caseload.

The transition of clients from the assigned caseload to the non-assigned caseload can be seen in the chart below.



PREVIOUSLY ASSIGNED CASELOAD

Cases where the recipient is no longer in receipt of income assistance and chooses to remain enrolled with the FMEP are referred to as “previous assigned cases”. Previously assigned cases make up a significant portion of the FMEP caseload at just under 42 percent of the total caseload, as seen in the following graph.



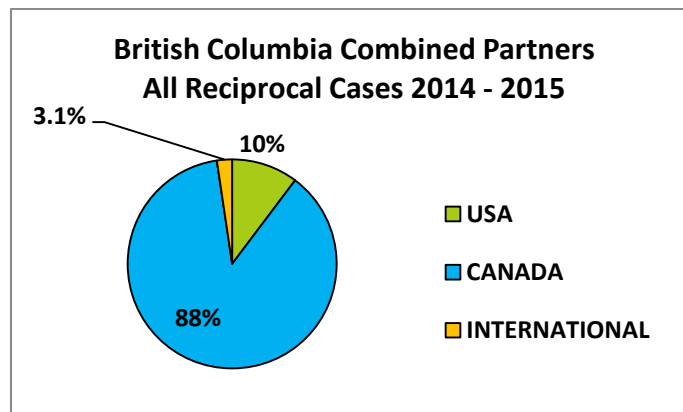
Assigned Cases: Cases where the recipient is currently in receipt of income assistance.

Never Assigned Cases: Cases where the recipient has never been in receipt of income assistance.

Previously Assigned Cases: Cases where the recipient was in receipt of income assistance at some point but is not currently receiving assistance.

RECIPROCAL CASELOADS

Reciprocal cases are maintenance cases in which either the support recipient or the support payor reside outside of British Columbia. These cases make up a significant portion of the overall FMEP caseload. Just over 5,100 maintenance cases involve a parent living outside of the province. The FMEP has reciprocal agreements with other maintenance enforcement programs in Canada and around the world. These agreements help ensure that children and families receive support no matter where they live.



The majority of reciprocal cases enrolled in the FMEP are cases where one parent resides in British Columbia and the other parent resides in another province or territory in Canada. Cases involving parents in the United States are fewer in number and, international cases from outside the United States make up a very small portion of the out-of-province caseload. Eighty-five percent of the

reciprocal caseload involves a parent in another province or territory in Canada, 11.9 percent of the reciprocal cases involve the United States and 3.1 percent of the cases involve a parent in a country outside of Canada or the United States.

Not surprisingly, the FMEP's largest partners for support enforcement in Canada and the United States are jurisdictions which are geographically close to British Columbia.

CANADIAN CASELOAD

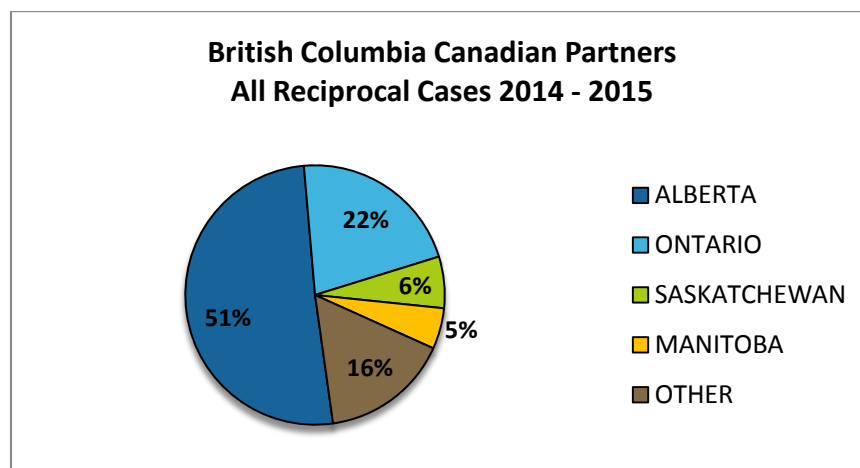
Cases where one parent lives in a province or territory outside British Columbia are made up primarily of cases where the other parent lives in western Canada. As the chart below shows, almost 59 percent of cases in the Canadian reciprocal caseload have one parent living in British Columbia and one parent living in Alberta.

The individual breakdown of number of reciprocal cases is shown in the table below.

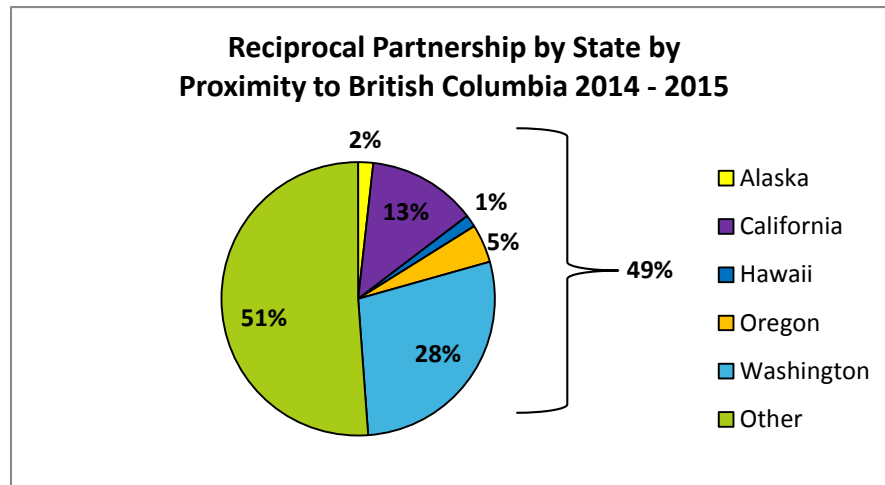
Alberta has the largest caseload with 4,105 cases enrolled with the British Columbia FMEP as of March 31, 2015.

Canadian Caseload by Province 2014 - 2015 (all cases)			
Province	Cases	Province	Cases
ALBERTA	4,105	NUNAVUT	9
MANITOBA	412	ONTARIO	1,743
NEW BRUNSWICK	115	PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND	24
NEWFOUNDLAND	127	QUEBEC	214
NOVA SCOTIA	236	SASKATCHEWAN	518
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES	56	YUKON	102

In Canada, the western provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba make up 70.65 percent of the total Canadian reciprocal caseload.



Where parents live in the United States, the Pacific border states of Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska and Hawaii make up almost one half (48.8 percent) of all shared cases with the United States.



INTERNATIONAL CASELOAD – UNITED STATES

The United States is the FMEP's largest single international partner. At the end of 2014-2015, the FMEP had 901 cases where one of the parents lived in the United States. This figure is up slightly from the previous year.

The table below shows the number of cases enrolled with the FMEP and the corresponding U.S. state.

United States Caseload by State 2014 - 2015 (all cases)					
State	# Cases	State	# Cases	State	# Cases
ALABAMA	5	KENTUCKY	4	NORTH DAKOTA	5
ALASKA*	16	LOUISIANA	0	OHIO	12
ARIZONA	27	MAINE	4	OKLAHOMA	7
ARKANSAS	6	MARYLAND	7	OREGON*	41
CALIFORNIA*	116	MASSACHUSETTS	7	PENNSYLVANIA	12
COLORADO	79	MICHIGAN	18	RHODE ISLAND	1
CONNECTICUT	4	MINNESOTA	14	SOUTH CAROLINA	4
DELAWARE	4	MISSISSIPPI	4	SOUTH DAKOTA	0
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	4	MISSOURI	14	TENNESSEE	7
FLORIDA	39	MONTANA	10	TEXAS	43
GEORGIA	12	NEBRASKA	3	UTAH	12
HAWAII*	13	NEVADA	14	VERMONT	4
IDAHO	13	NEW HAMPSHIRE	2	VIRGINIA	8
ILLINOIS	5	NEW JERSEY	4	WASHINGTON*	254
INDIANA	8	NEW MEXICO	5	WEST VIRGINIA	1
IOWA	2	NEW YORK	20	WISCONSIN	1
KANSAS	7	NORTH CAROLINA	3	WYOMING	4

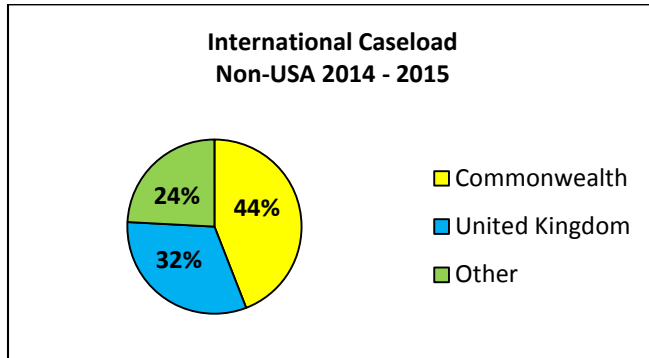
*Pacific Partner

As noted above, the majority of cases in the United States involve jurisdictions that are geographically close to British Columbia.

Washington State is the FMEP’s largest single partner, accounting for 28 percent of all U.S. cases, while California accounts for almost 13 percent of U.S. cases. Florida and Texas each have about four percent of the U.S. caseload.

INTERNATIONAL CASELOAD – OTHER COUNTRIES

Comprised of only 3.1 percent of the reciprocal caseload, these cases are ones where one parent lives outside Canada or the United States. The total case count and break down are shown in the chart and table below.



INTERNATIONAL CASELOAD 2014 - 2015 (Non-USA)			
Province	Cases	Province	Cases
AUSTRALIA	80	NORWAY	1
CZECH REPUBLIC	3	SLOVAKIA	3
FIJI	1	SINGAPORE	1
GERMANY	17	SOUTH AFRICA	2
HONG KONG	7	SWITZERLAND	3
NEW ZEALAND	12	UNITED KINGDOM	67

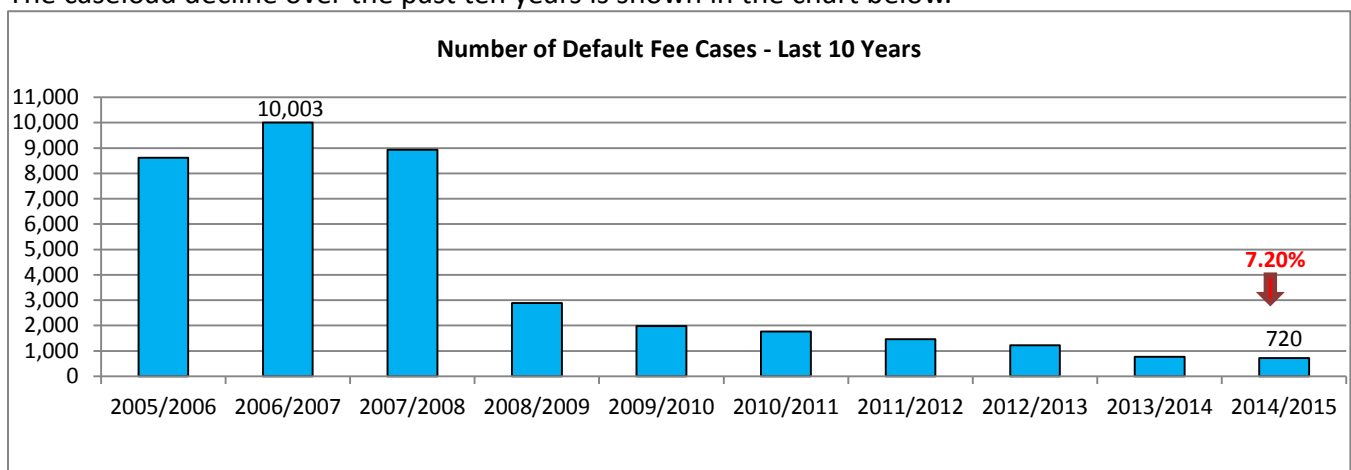
Interestingly, the majority of cases (77.7 percent) are from Commonwealth jurisdictions. The United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Fiji make up the majority of the cases. The United Kingdom and Australia alone account for almost 68 percent of the international (non-U.S.) caseload.

GOVERNMENT FEE CASES

Government fee-only cases are cases where the FMEP is only collecting a fee owed to the Government of British Columbia. The fee is collected after all maintenance owing to the recipient has been paid; this includes unpaid support and interest.

The number of fee-only cases is very low – less than two percent of the overall FMEP caseload. This caseload has declined significantly both due to collection efforts as well as to legislative changes preventing the collection of fees that are more than six years old.

The caseload decline over the past ten years is shown in the chart below.



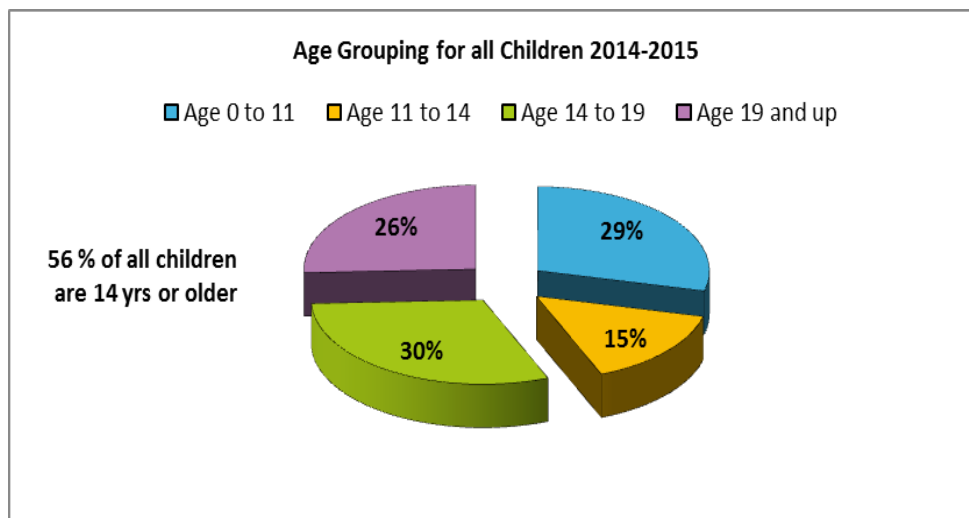
FMEP CLIENTS

The section provides information about the client and children that make up the families that are served by the FMEP.

CHILDREN

The FMEP continues to be a program that helps families who have older children. As the chart below indicates, more than half of the children receiving maintenance through the FMEP are more than 14 years old.

A comparison of the number of children by age group on cases enrolled with the FMEP, with the number of children in BC (507,326²) in the same age groups, indicates that the FMEP provides support to approximately six percent of children in this age group. Expressed differently, that means that approximately **1 in 20** children between the ages of 10 and 19 in BC are receiving child support through the FMEP.



² Source: Population Estimates: *Population by age and sex, provinces, territories and Canada*. Vital Statistics Canada, Release date June, 2015. <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx>. Retrieved March 22, 2016.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN LIVING IN BC, ENROLLED IN THE FMEP 2014 - 2015							
2014	Total BC Children Population	Children Enrolled with BC FMEP	Percentage of Children Enrolled in FMEP	2014	BC Census Data	FMEP Enrolment Figures	Percentage of Children Enrolled in FMEP
Child 0 - 24	1,282,190	51,639	4.03%	12 years	45,332	2,617	5.77%
0 years	43,725	25	0.06%	13 years	46,376	2,813	6.07%
1 year	44,332	211	0.48%	14 years	47,853	2,950	6.16%
2 years	44,108	491	1.11%	15 years	49,987	3,265	6.53%
3 years	44,290	768	1.73%	16 years	52,568	3,397	6.46%
4 years	45,149	1,035	2.29%	17 years	55,251	3,645	6.60%
5 years	45,978	1,360	2.96%	18 years	59,133	3,524	5.96%
6 years	46,222	1,630	3.53%	19 years	63,341	3,184	5.03%
7 years	45,760	1,937	4.23%	20 years	64,481	2,742	4.25%
8 years	44,959	2,084	4.64%	21 years	64,506	2,157	3.34%
9 years	44,743	2,207	4.93%	22 years	63,330	1,863	2.94%
10 years	45,238	2,303	5.09%	23 years	62,772	1,558	2.48%
11 years	45,479	2,553	5.61%	24 years	63,891	1,323	2.07%

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 051-0001 - Estimates of population, by age group and sex for July 1, Canada, provinces and territories, annual (persons unless otherwise noted), CANSIM (database). (Retrieved: 2016-01-18)

Programs such as the FMEP are crucial to helping reduce child poverty in the province:

“Census data has consistently shown a staggering 49.5% of children in lone-parent families lived in poverty compared with 13.2% of children in couple families.”

“The number of poor children in BC was 167,810 — enough to fill the Disneyland theme park four times.”

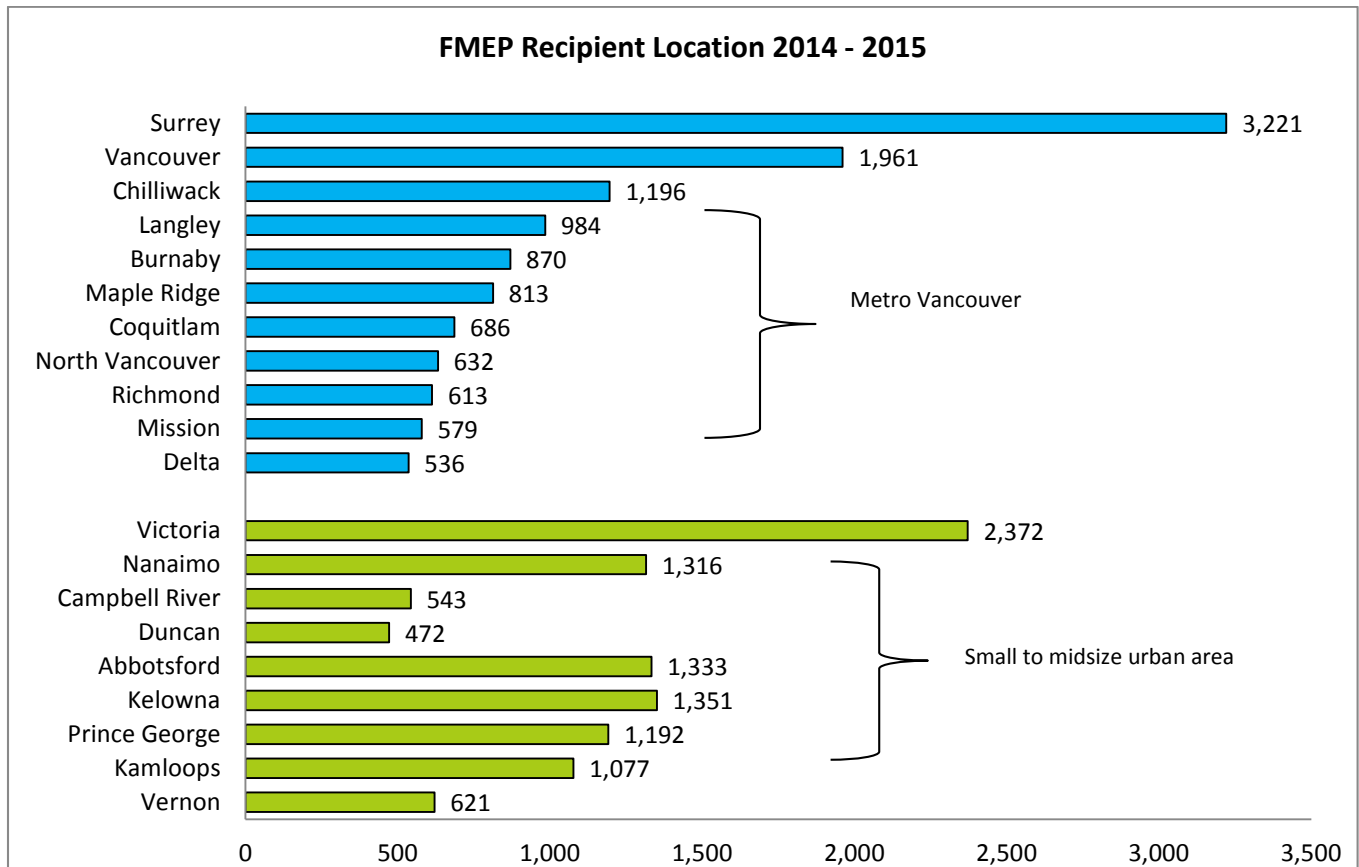
“I feel the need to ensure that you know how much. . . [your] time and effort means to me and my children and other families.”

FMEP Recipient

Source: 2015 Child Poverty BC Report Card. Retrieved from: <http://www.cwp-csp.ca/resources/sites/default/files/resources/2015-BC-Child-Poverty-Report-Card-FirstCall-Web-2015-11.pdf>

RECIPIENTS

As of March 31, 2015, 39,952 recipients were enrolled in the FMEP. As shown in the graph below, most recipients, (59 percent), live in urban centres in British Columbia. Almost 30 percent of recipients reside in Metro Vancouver, and another 29 percent live in the small to mid-sized urban centres such as Victoria, Abbotsford or Kamloops. Only 31.5 percent of recipients live in small towns/villages or rural locations.



The average recipient enrolled in the FMEP is 42 years old, which is not surprising considering most FMEP families include children in their teen years.

Just over 13.5 percent of recipients enrolled in the FMEP were in receipt of income assistance. Many of these clients choose to remain with the FMEP even after their assignment of maintenance rights ends. Thus, 28.17 percent of all recipients are persons who have been in receipt of income assistance at some point in the past. They remain enrolled to ensure that their payments are up to date, and that outstanding arrears continue to be collected.

PAYORS

The average payor enrolled in the FMEP is 45 years old, approximately three years older than the average age of recipients enrolled.

There were 39,568 payors enrolled in the FMEP as of March 31, 2015. During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, 1,828 payors had more than one active enrolled case.

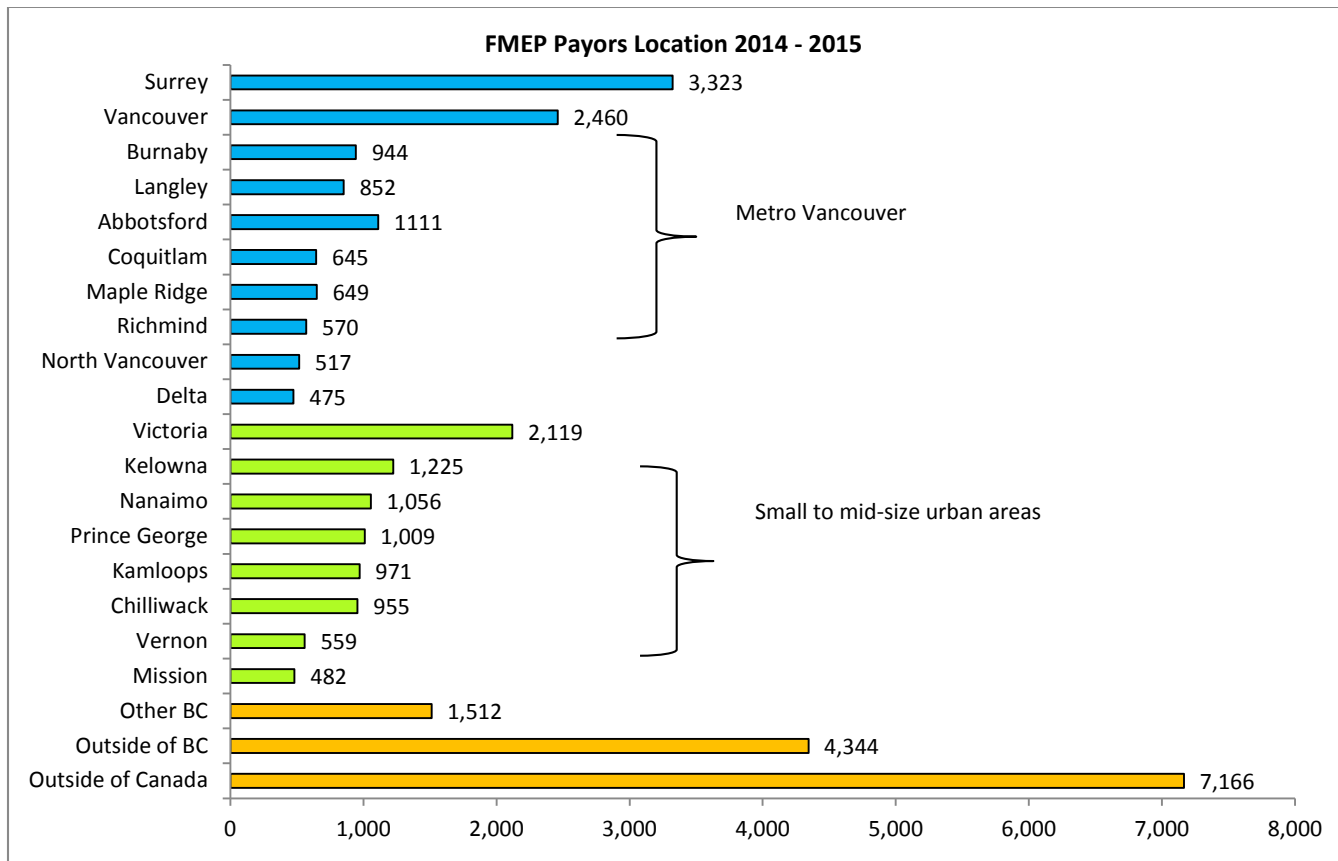
"I just wanted to express my eternal gratitude for helping handle a difficult situation regarding child support for my daughter."

FMEP Recipient

"It hasn't always been easy, but I wanted to thank you for helping me not only deal with my child support payments, but with getting my life back on track."

FMEP Payor

Similar to FMEP recipients, payors tend to live in the larger urban centres of British Columbia, as shown in the chart below.



29.1 percent of payors live in Metro Vancouver, and 21.2 percent live in the small to mid-sized urban areas such as Victoria, Kamloops or Abbotsford. Almost four percent of payors live in smaller towns and villages throughout British Columbia, and 22.9 percent of all payors live outside the province.

PAYORS IN RECEIPT OF INCOME ASSISTANCE

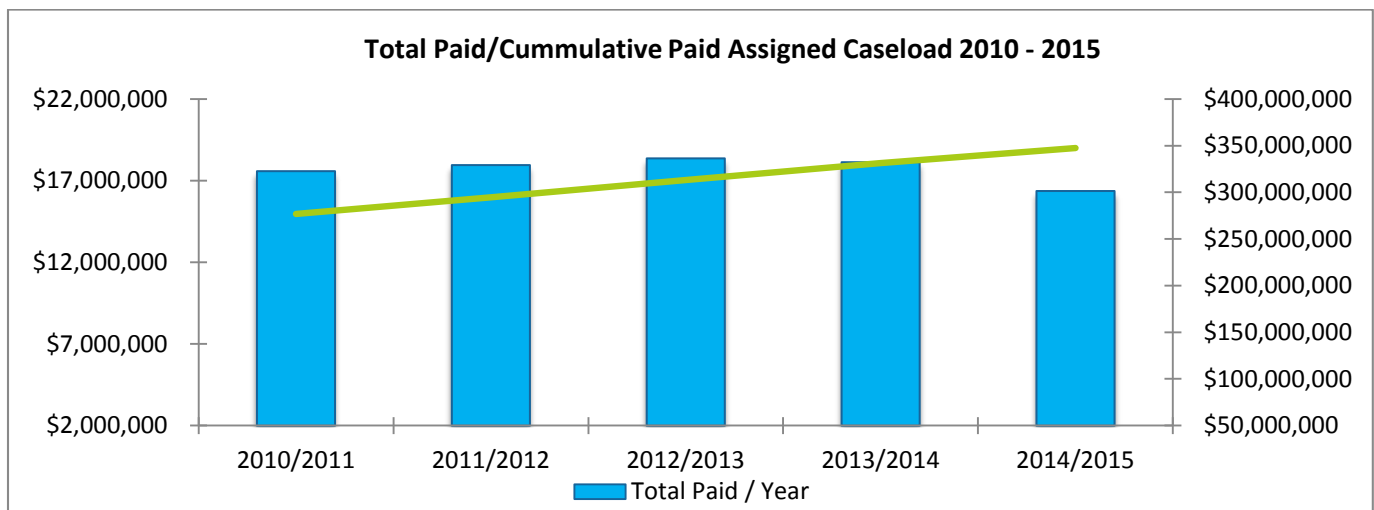
Last year was the first year since 2008 that the number of payors in receipt of income assistance and enrolled in the FMEP started to decline; a small but encouraging trend.

As of March 31, 2015, fewer than 12 percent of FMEP payors living in British Columbia were in receipt of income assistance. As payors become self-sufficient they are more likely to have the means to pay ongoing support.

Fiscal Year	Number of Payors	Percentage of Payors in BC on IA	Change From Previous Year
2009/2010	3,796	9.87%	↑ 0.06%
2010/2011	4,584	11.83%	↑ 1.96%
2011/2012	4,718	12.31%	↑ 0.48%
2012/2013	4,674	12.36%	↑ 0.05%
2013/2014	4,494	12.13%	↓ 0.23%
2014/2015	4,360	11.96%	↓ 0.17%

COLLECTIONS ON ASSIGNED CASES

Recovery of funds for recipients who are in receipt of income assistance is critically important. Maintenance payments received supplement employment earnings, assisting recipients to achieve self-sufficiency. Additionally, payments received by recipients while on income assistance offset income assistance thus reducing government expenditures. The amount collected in 2014-2015 for assigned cases again dropped slightly, by less than one percent. The reduction in payments on these cases was directly attributable to the reduction in the assigned caseload.



INTEREST

Since 1997, British Columbia has charged and collected interest on outstanding arrears. This is done to ensure that maintenance obligations are treated in the same way as other debts. In 2014-2015 the FMEP collected and distributed over \$2.6 million in interest to British Columbia families. This amount is consistent with the previous fiscal year's collection of interest on maintenance cases.

COLLECTIONS ON RECIPROCAL CASES

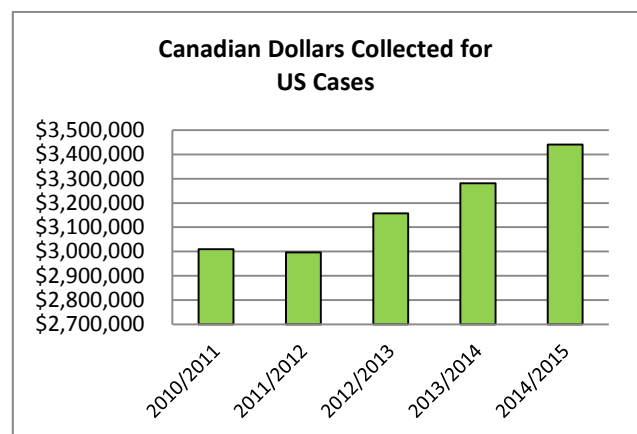
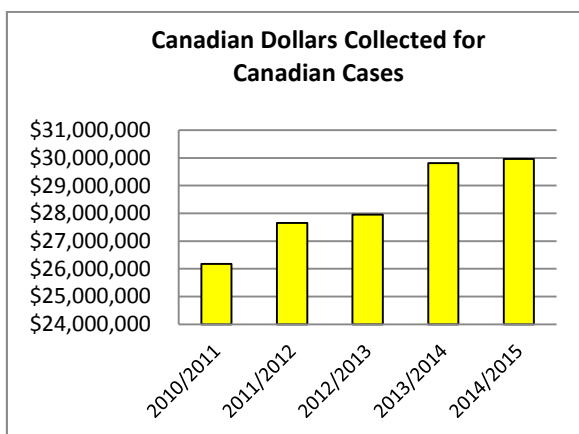
As noted above, reciprocal cases are those cases where one parent resides outside the Province of British Columbia. Collections from cases where the payor lives outside British Columbia and another jurisdiction is collecting funds for a British Columbia family increased by 1.9 percent during the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

Just over \$34.2 million was received on these cases. This was made up of \$21.2 million received from other jurisdictions and \$13.0 million collected by the British Columbia FMEP for families residing outside of British Columbia.

The FMEP continues to work closely with our domestic and international partners. In Canada, Alberta remains the largest overall partner with British Columbia. Together we share over 4,100 cases – and in 2014-2015 just under \$18.0 million was collected on those cases. \$5.6 million was collected by British Columbia for Alberta families, and \$12.3 million was collected by Alberta for British Columbia families. The reason for the disparity is that there is a much larger number of payors living and working in Alberta than payors living and working in British Columbia with families in Alberta.

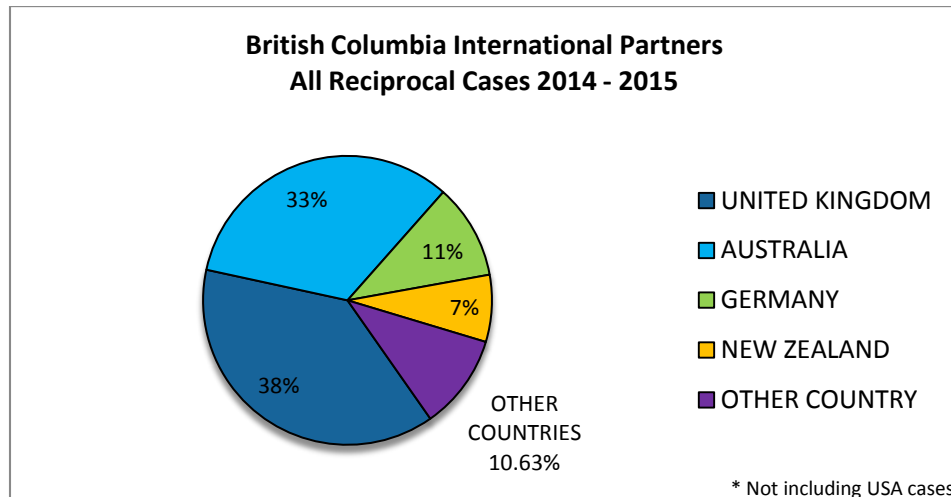
Outside Canada, Washington State continues to be the largest single partner with British Columbia. In 2014-2015, FMEP collected and sent over \$249,484 to Washington State and they returned \$519,848 for British Columbia families.

The pattern of collections, as noted in the charts below, has been fairly strong. Collections with domestic partners have risen in four of the past five years, and collections with the United States have grown over the past two years.



International cases (outside the United States) make up a very small portion of the FMEP caseload. They numbered just 206 cases as of March 31, 2015. Australia and the United Kingdom make up over

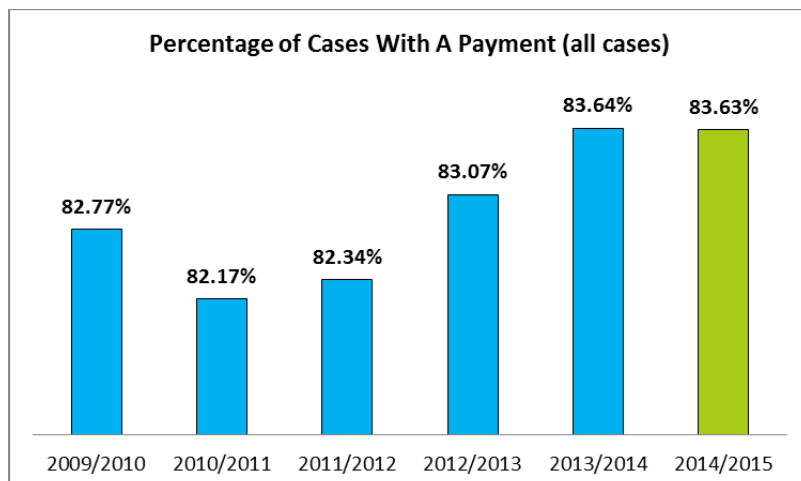
71 percent of the caseload and as a result are 68 percent of all funds collected. International cases combined accounted for collections of just over \$907,000 in 2014-2015. This is a 57 percent increase over the 2013-2014 fiscal year.



COLLECTION RATES AND ARREARS

A key performance measure for the FMEP, in terms of determining the impact that maintenance collection has on families, is the percentage of enrolled cases that received a payment over the course of the year. For the 2014-2015 year, payments were made on 83.6 percent of all cases. After seeing improvements over the past three consecutive years, this was the first year in which the percentage of cases receiving a payment remained static.

In 2014-2015, over the course of the year at any point almost 30 percent of cases were fully paid with no arrears or unpaid maintenance. Almost 66 percent of cases had some arrears and fewer than five percent of cases had not received a payment since the time of enrolment.



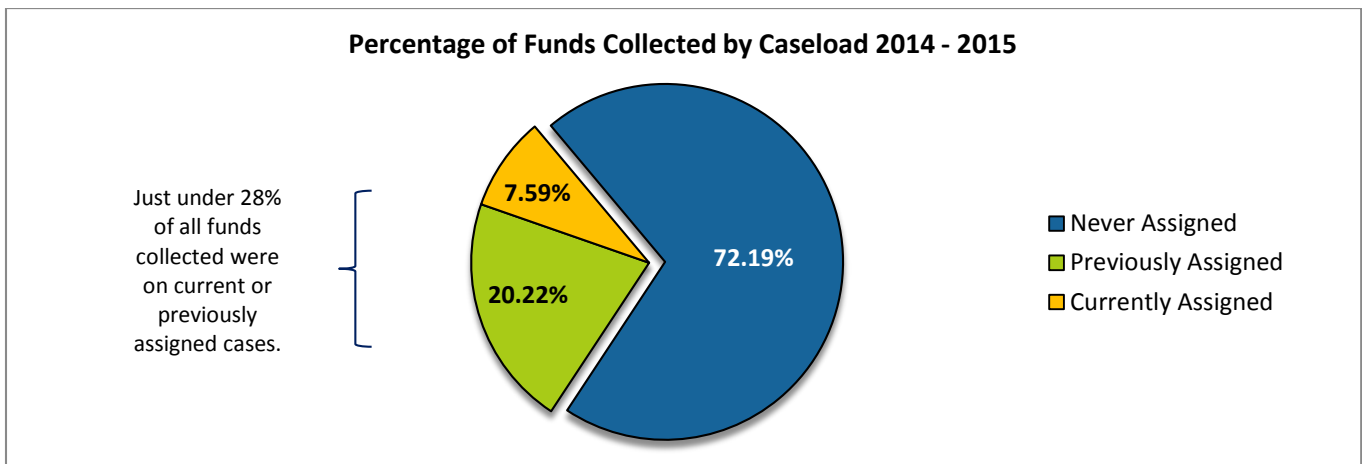
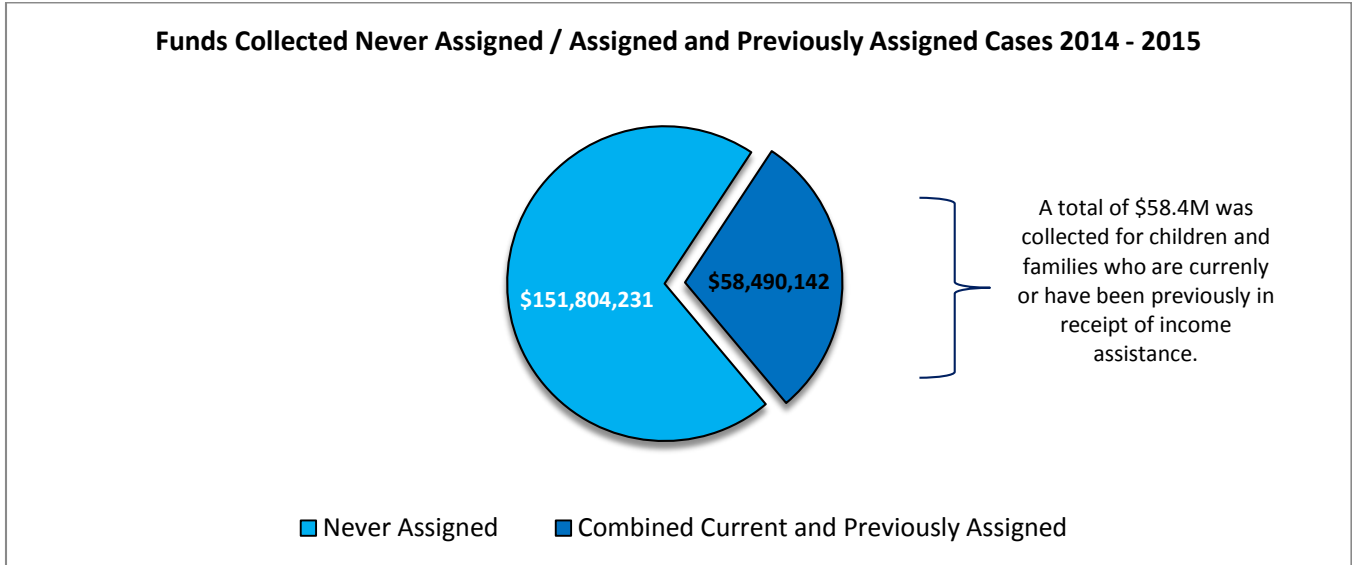
Fully Paid - No arrears owing at all.

Partially Paid - Some payment has been received on these cases, but arrears are owing.

Never Paid - No money has ever been received on these cases.

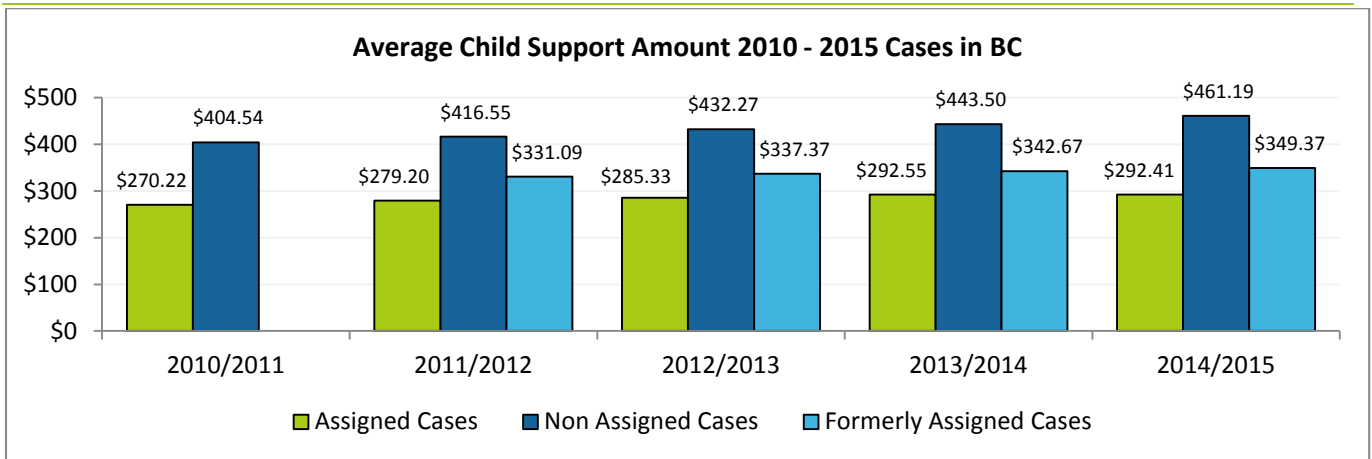
PAYMENTS TO CLIENTS NO LONGER IN RECEIPT OF INCOME ASSISTANCE

Clients who remain in the FMEP after ceasing to receive income assistance are an important group of clients as these families often depend significantly on the maintenance in order to remain self-sufficient. Collections for this client group are measured separately. Over \$58 million was collected for these families in 2014-2015, representing 20 percent of all the funds collected by the FMEP.



CHILD SUPPORT ORDERS

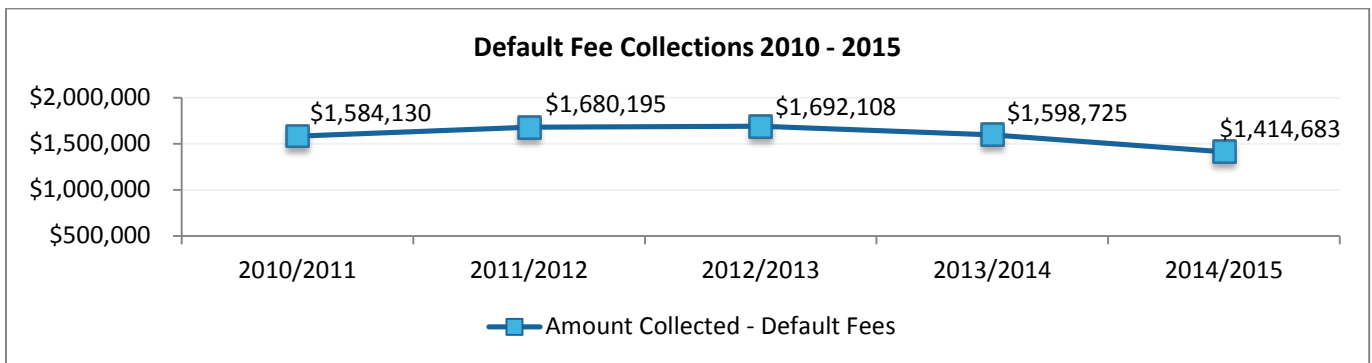
The average amount ordered for child support increased again in 2014-2015. For clients not in receipt of income assistance, the average amount payable has now increased by \$71 per month over the last five years. The increase in order size for assigned cases has been lower – a \$24 increase over the same time period. The gap between the average order amount for assigned cases and non-assigned cases continues to grow, although the gap between non-assigned and previously assigned is smaller.



FEES RECOVERED FOR GOVERNMENT

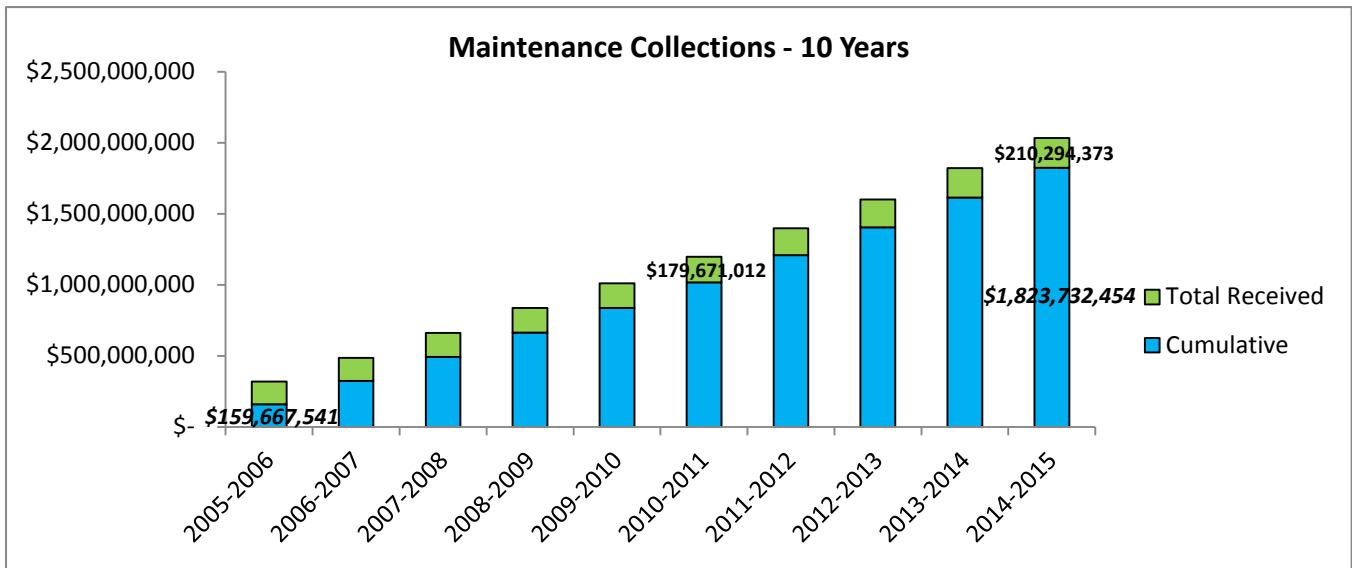
Under British Columbia law, an annual fee equivalent to one month of maintenance, to a maximum of \$400, may be charged to payors who either miss or are late on two payments in a calendar year. These fees are collected after all maintenance owed to the recipient, including interest and arrears, is paid in full.

These fees help to offset the costs of the FMEP and together with funds collected for clients in receipt of income assistance help to ensure that the FMEP is cost-neutral program for government. In 2014-2015 just over \$1.4 million in fees was collected. This, combined with the \$16.4 million collected on assigned cases, ensured that the FMEP was cost-neutral for the sixth consecutive year. Collection results for the past five fiscal years are noted in the following chart. Since the implementation of the default fee, the FMEP has collected just over \$15 million in government fees.



FAMILY SUPPORT OUTCOMES

Last year, while celebrating its 25th Anniversary, the FMEP saw record levels of maintenance payments collected. This year’s collections hit an all-time high of \$210,294,373. Overall, the total volume of cases has decreased during this fiscal year; nonetheless, collections were up 0.84 percent over the 2013-2014 year. Each year the FMEP continues to exceed the amount collected in prior years. Please see the following graph.



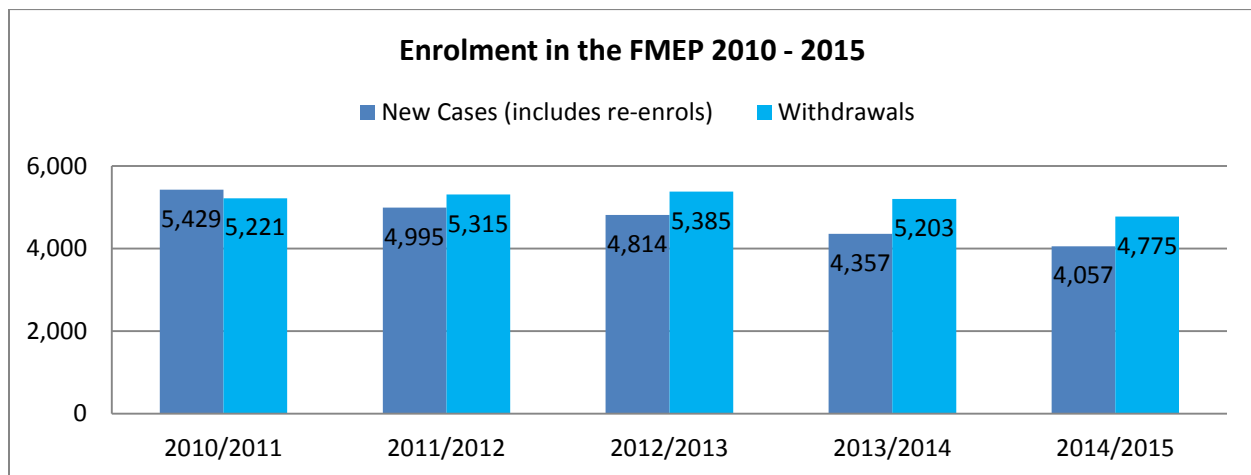
PROGRAM OPERATIONS

The next section discusses the various aspects of FMEP program delivery, providing information concerning file enrolment, payment processing, enforcement activities and client communications.

ENROLMENT

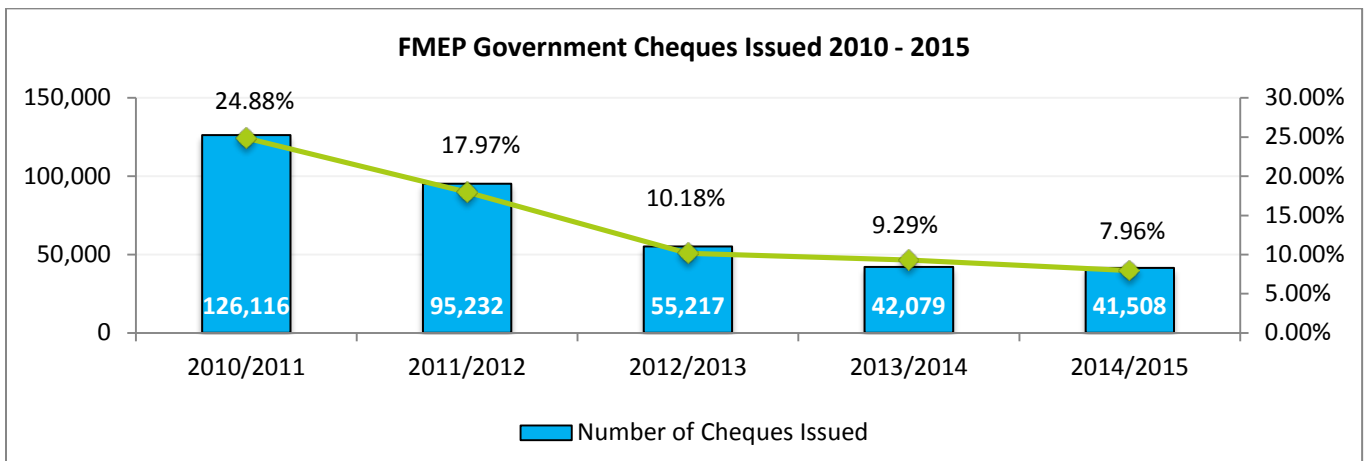
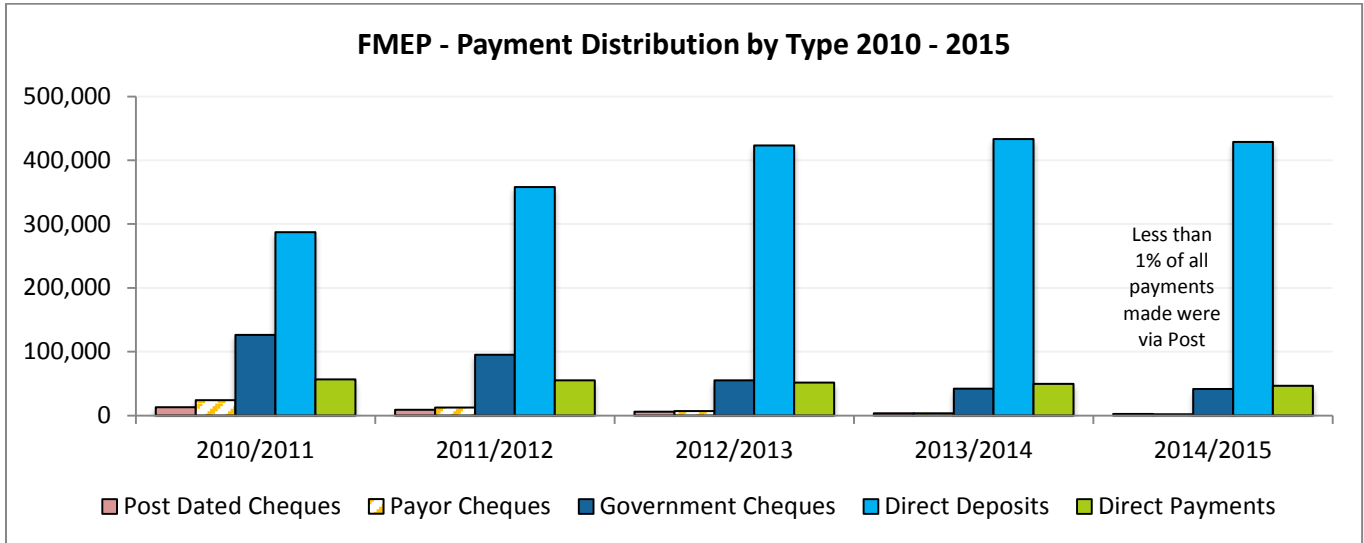
There has been a slight drop in the number of new enrolments over the past five years as shown in the following chart. This combined with an increase in the number of cases withdrawing from the FMEP has led to an overall decline in caseload, as noted above.

Of more importance to clients has been the very remarkable decline in the time it takes to complete the enrolment process for new cases. Legislative amendments in 2012 removing the requirement for the FMEP to have a certified copy of the maintenance order before enrolling have reduced the backlog of cases awaiting enrolment from over 700 to less than 200. Many cases are now enrolled within two days from the time the package is received at the FMEP office, in contrast to the four month wait for court orders that was not uncommon in past years.



PAYMENT PROCESSING

The most significant change in payment processing over the past five years has been the move to electronic payments for both the receipt of payments and the disbursement of payments to recipients. Although some payments are still made to recipients by way of government issued cheque, by the end of 2014-2015, almost 94 percent of recipients were receiving payments through direct deposit to a bank account. The move away from government issued cheques has not only increased efficiencies for the FMEP but has also enabled recipients to get their maintenance more quickly and more securely. These two trends are shown in the following graphs.



In addition to the significant increase in the disbursement of funds electronically by the FMEP, there has been a significant increase in the number of payments made by payors through internet banking. More than one-third of all funds received by the FMEP in 2013-2014 were made by payors using internet banking.

ENFORCEMENT

Where maintenance payments are not made voluntarily, the FMEP will issue various types of enforcement to collect the unpaid maintenance. Court enforcement (taking a payor to court to explain why payments are not being made) is generally only used as a last resort.

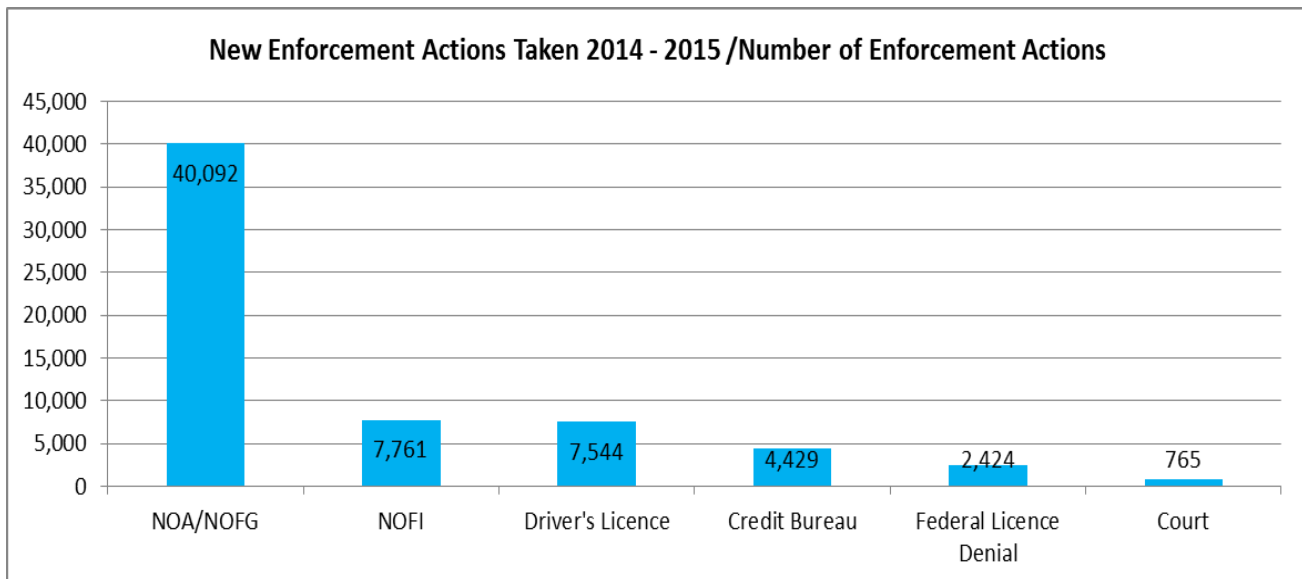
In most cases the unpaid maintenance can be recovered using non-court administrative enforcement processes such as the interception of wages or other types of payments, or through the restriction of licences and privileges, such as a passport denial, or driving licence restriction.

ADMINISTRATIVE ENFORCEMENT

The FMEP always attempts to make a voluntary payment arrangement with payors. Negotiation on payment of ongoing maintenance and the arrears is a cornerstone of the client centric focus of the FMEP. However where payments are not made, the FMEP will initiate administrative enforcement actions, as necessary, to gain compliance.

In 2014-2015 over 62,200 new administrative enforcement actions were initiated by FMEP enforcement officers. This included over 7,243 wage garnishments, almost 2,200 bank garnishments per month, 8,400 federal interceptions, 5,000 passport/federal licence denials, and almost 2,600 driver's licence restrictions.

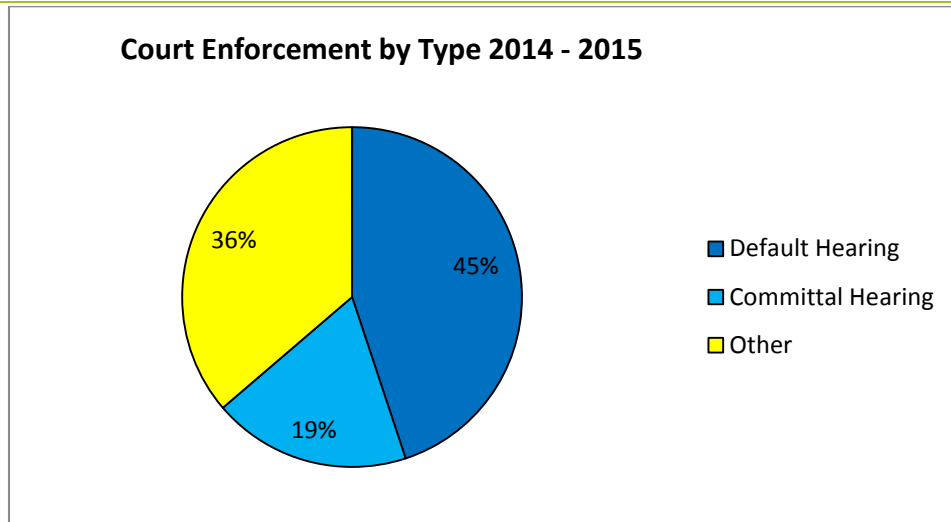
The most common enforcement actions are shown in the following chart.



***NOA** – Notice of Attachment, **NOFG** – Notice of Federal Garnishment, **NOFI** – Notice of Federal Interception

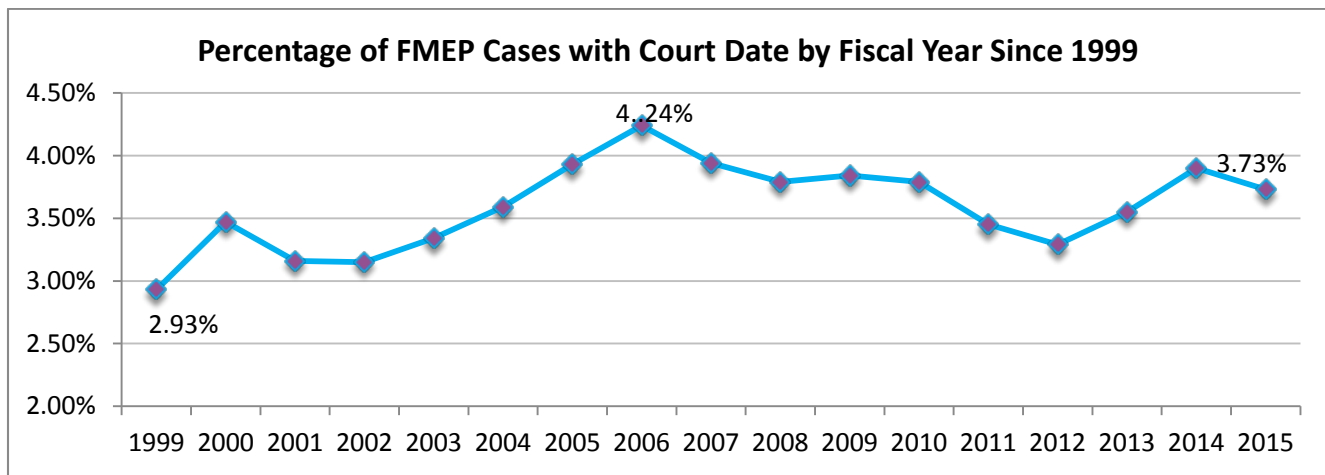
COURT ENFORCEMENT

Where administrative enforcement does not result in full payment of the outstanding maintenance, and the FMEP believes that the payor does have the capacity to pay the maintenance, the FMEP may initiate a hearing with a British Columbia court to require a payor to explain why he or she has not paid the amount required under the maintenance order.



This action is not taken very frequently. In 2014-2015 approximately four percent of cases were taken to court. This number has remained fairly consistent over previous years.

A combination of administrative enforcement action and voluntary payments made by payors has generally reduced the necessity of court enforcement.



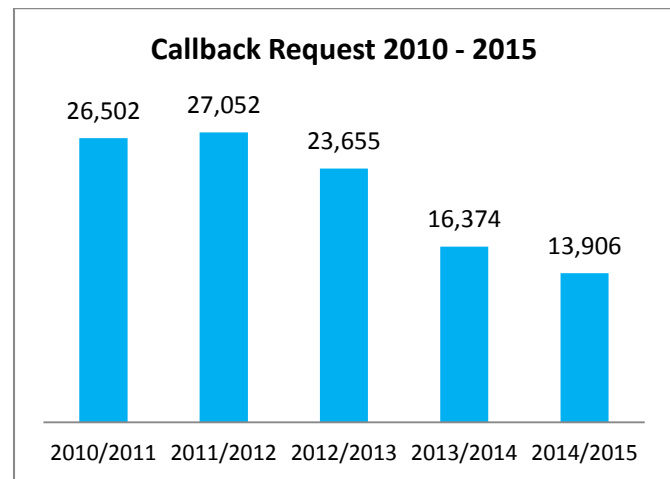
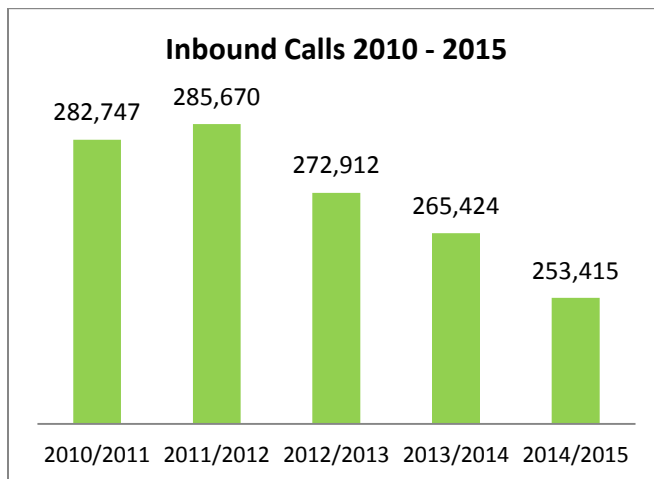
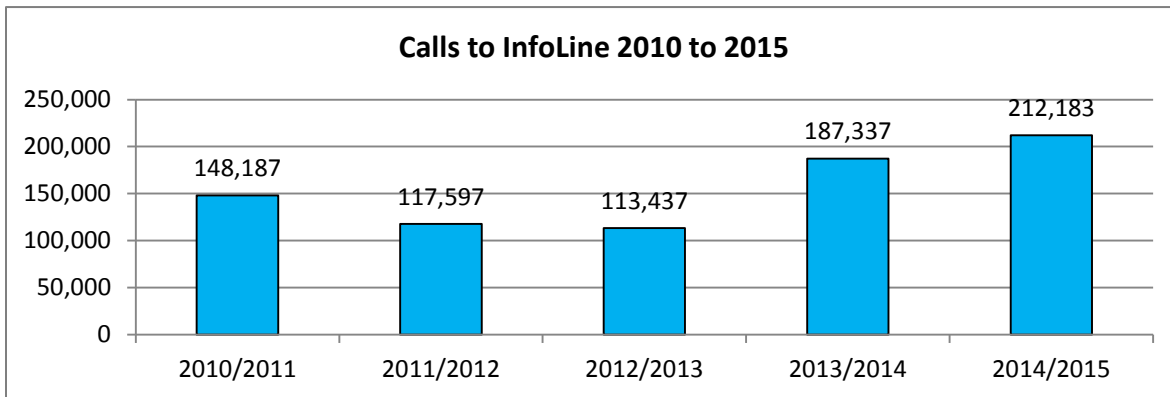
CLIENT SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The FMEP maintains the highest levels of customer service and communications practices. The program has established several key metrics to monitor this, and has developed both electronic and in person services to communicate with clients. The FMEP operates three call centres, an automated telephony service “InfoLine”, a full-service website and an outreach program. These services combine to ensure that the FMEP provides efficient, professional and cost-effective services to all clients. These services are reviewed annually, and enhanced as necessary to ensure that client needs are being met.

INFOLINE

The InfoLine is an automated telephone service that provides clients with up-to-date case and payment information. The service was completely restructured two years ago. Since that time there has been a

noticeable increase in callers using the service. The volume of calls to the InfoLine in 2014-2015 was up 13 percent over prior fiscal year and has now increased over 87 percent since its restructuring.

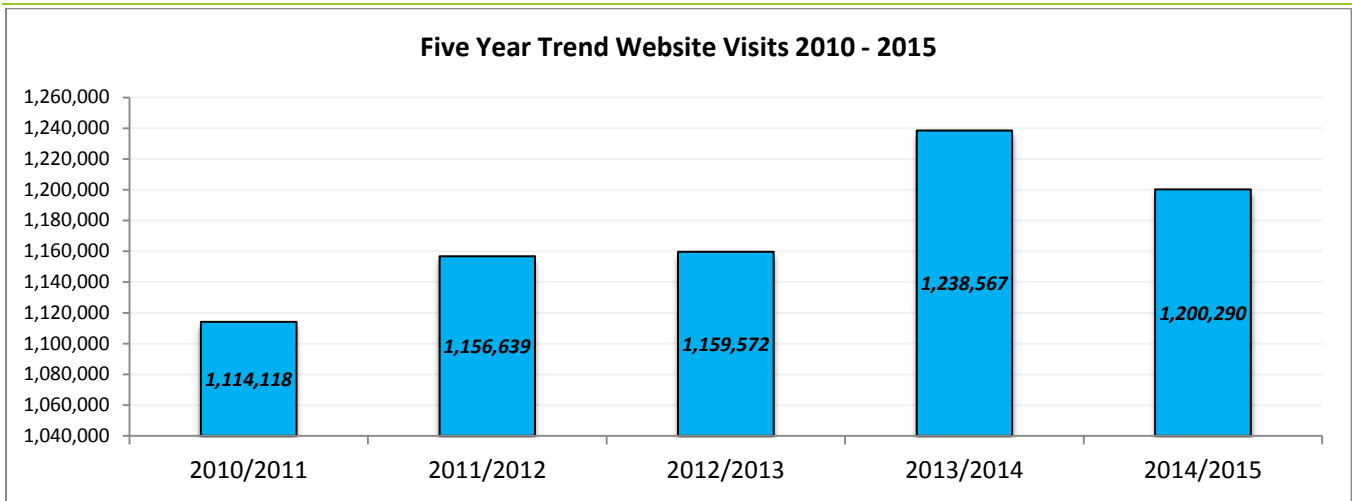


FMEP WEBSITE

In addition to the InfoLine service, the program operates a full-service website (www.fmep.ag.gov.bc.ca). The website is an important way for clients to receive up-to-date information about their case. It also allows clients to communicate with program staff using an e-messaging system.

The FMEP website was completely rebuilt in 2014-2015 and the new website went live in April 2015. The new format allows for clients to sign-in and create their own unique account, using their email address. Clients no longer require case and personal identification numbers to sign-in. Clients with multiple files can now access all information at once rather than having to log-in each file independent of the other(s).

Usage of the website over the past five years is shown in the following chart.

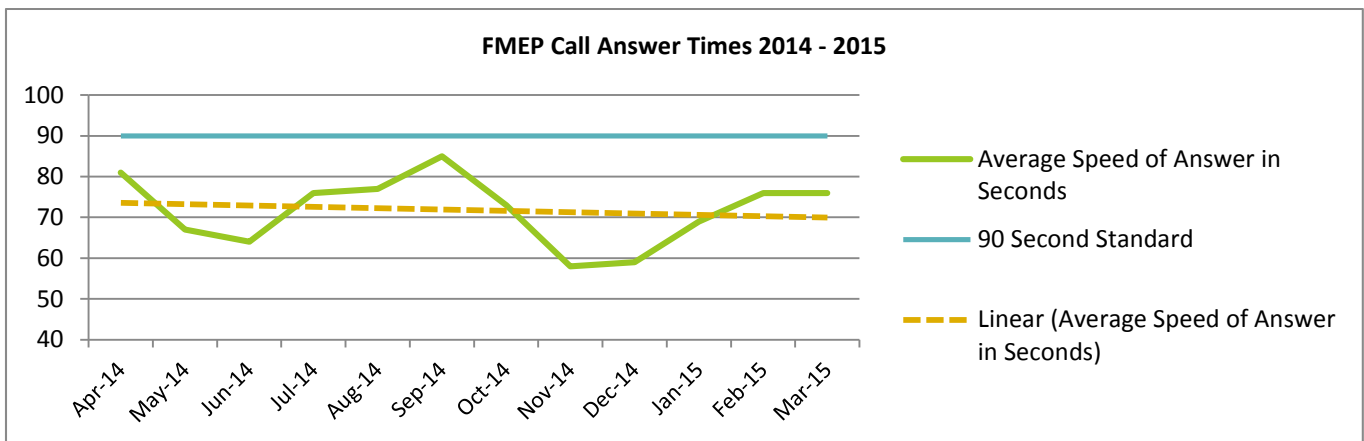


Over the last fiscal year, the website received over 1.2 million hits, traffic to the website decreased approximately three percent and one in four recipients continued to use the web as a source for information. E-messaging by clients through the website increased, averaging 4,536 messages per month, and there were over 11,000 requests for account statements made by clients each month.

FMEP CALL CENTRES

The FMEP operates three call centres, one in each of the regional offices. Together the three centres handle about 14,500 calls per month.

Prompt, professional and courteous service from the FMEP call centres is a fundamental commitment – and the FMEP has maintained a consistent 90-second call answer time for many years. Last year was no exception, and this service level was achieved each month. Overall call answer times for 2014-2015 are shown below.



OUTREACH AND THE COMPREHENSIVE CHILD SUPPORT SERVICE (CCSS)

The FMEP Outreach service began in 2000. In December 2001, the CCSS was launched through the Family Justice Services Branch of the ministry. This provided the opportunity for the two services to work together to assist mutual clients through the process of changing support orders and repayment

of arrears. Clients are referred between the two services. Since FMEP's Outreach Program and the Family Justice's CCSS have been working together, the benefit of this integration has been reflected in the number and diversity of clientele and issues referred to the FMEP Outreach Program.

Having now completed the 15th year of operation, the outreach service continues to operate from four main regional locations. The FMEP provides outreach services in Kelowna, Vancouver, Surrey (West Fraser) and Nanaimo, and ensures that clients from all over British Columbia have access to this necessary service.

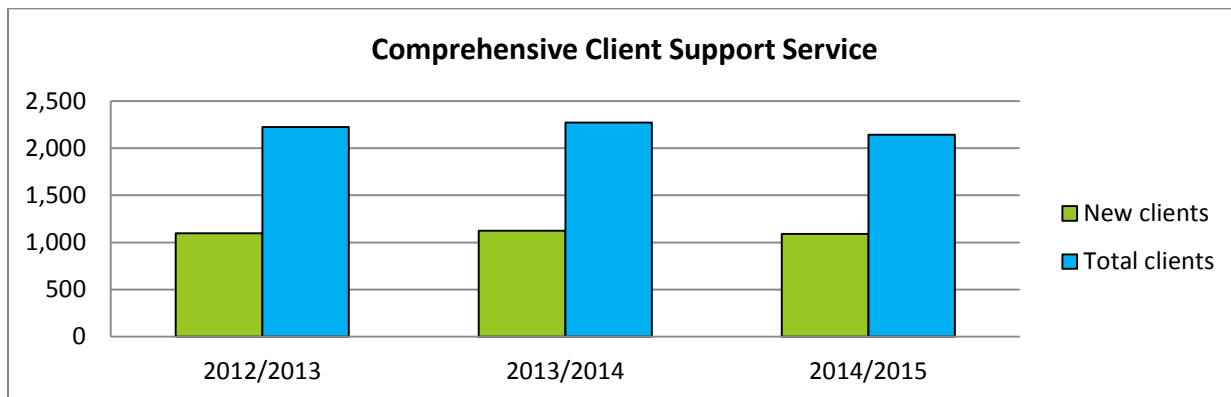
Payors tend to be the largest number of FMEP clients (66 percent) using outreach services. Most contacts are for general information about being enrolled in the program (50 percent), enforcement related issues (25 percent) and to discuss applications to change/vary an order (22 percent).

TOTAL CONTACTS

Reflecting the overall caseload decline, there was a decline in the overall contacts and unique clients receiving outreach services.

Outreach officers play an important part in coordinating and collecting payments on cases that they work. In 2014-2015, over \$232,000 was received directly by outreach officers.

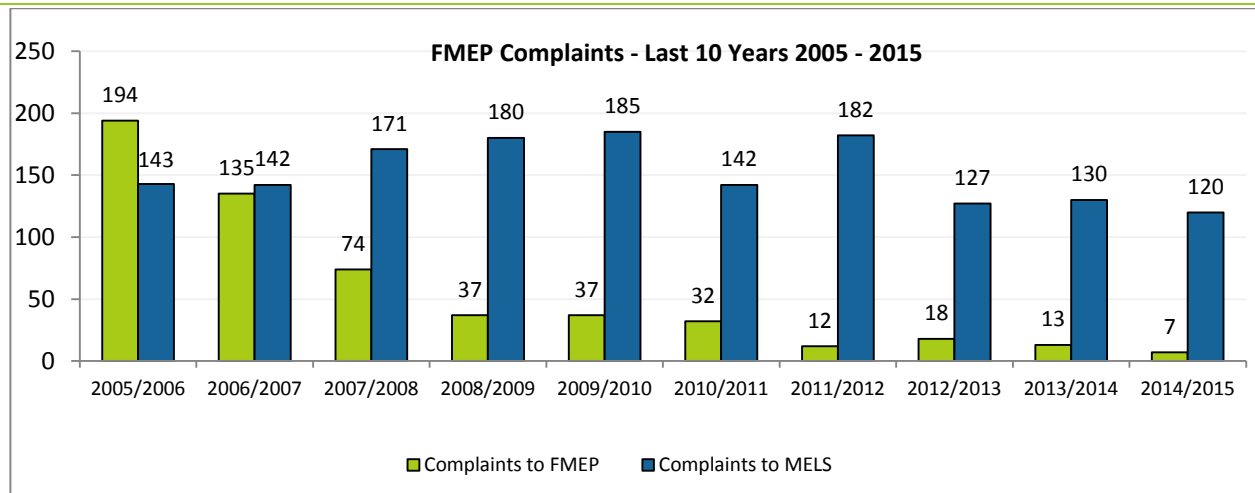
Over 1,000 clients accessed these services in the 2014-2015 fiscal year.



FMEP outreach workers currently share offices throughout the regions with Family Justice councilors. In the upcoming fiscal year, the outreach workers will have designated offices in the Surrey, Robson Square and Kamloops courthouses. It is anticipated this change will allow existing and potential clients better access to CCSS, resulting in an increase in total client usage.

CLIENT SERVICE AND COMPLAINTS

The FMEP is focused on providing the highest levels of customer service. This translates into very low numbers of complaints to the FMEP and to the Director of Maintenance Enforcement with the Maintenance Enforcement Locate Services (MELS). The number of complaints over the last 10 fiscal years are noted in the chart below.



Considering the size of the FMEP caseload (41,503 cases), the low number of complaints confirms the strong and effective working relationships that the FMEP has built with its clients.

"I am grateful for the services here and could not have done it without you."

Payor attending Outreach Services

PROGRAM INITIATIVES

The 2014-2015 year saw the state of two critical initiatives for the FMEP. An initiative to completely replace the aging telephone system for the FMEP with a voice-over-internet system was started. This will provide better call management and handling for the call centres while allowing better call flow between offices. In addition, the design and programming of a new FMEP website commenced. The existing website, built in 1998 has outlived its usefulness and the new website provided a better platform for providing services to employers and interacting with clients more effectively.

STAFF AND PROGRAM COSTS

Operating from three regional offices, Burnaby, Victoria and Kamloops, the FMEP staffing levels remained constant at 203 staff. The FMEP remained cost neutral to government overall – collecting an offset of \$18.1 million in social assistance payments in addition to just under \$1.6 million from default fees.

The FMEP is a very cost efficient program. The total funding for the FMEP in 2014-2015 was \$18.5 million which translates to \$1 spent: \$11.37 collected.

OUTLOOK FOR 2015 – 2016

Despite the decrease in total caseload volume in the Lower Mainland, maintenance collected in the 2014-2015 fiscal year continued to increase. In the presenting year, it is anticipated that British Columbia will lead the provinces in economic growth. Economic growth can be indicative of a per capital increase in income, a better standard of living, and overall wellbeing. Given this economic climate, combined with the estimable efforts of the staff, continued support from the government, the employer community, and our reciprocal partners, 2015-2016 is poised to be another successful year for the FMEP.