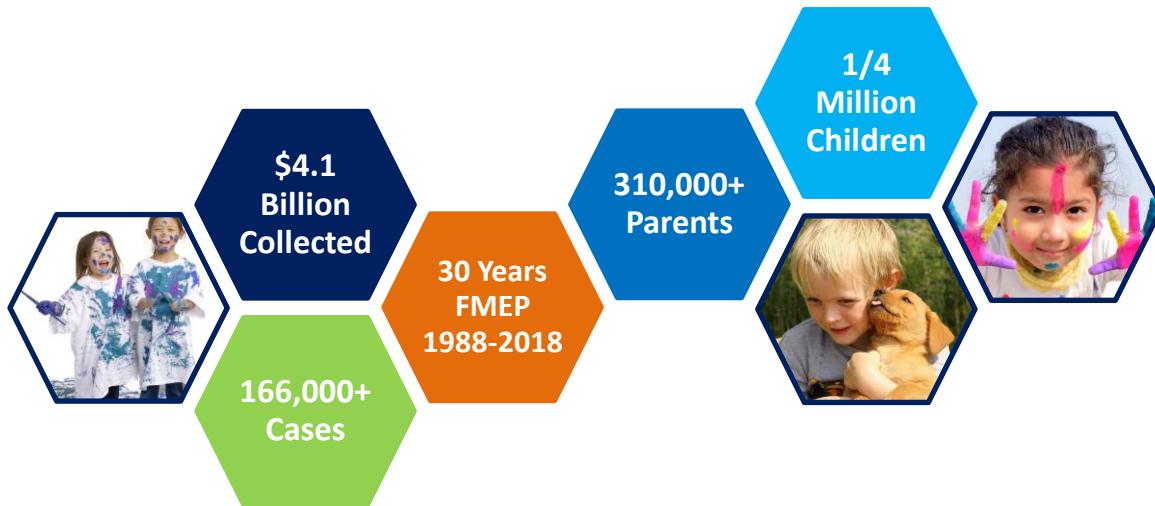


# Family Maintenance Enforcement Program



# ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2018 - 2019

*Serving British Columbia Children and Families since 1988*



Ministry of  
Attorney General

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019

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## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The 2018/19 results were significant for the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program and the families served by FMEP. Although the overall caseload continued a slow decline, the results in all areas were strong.

The 2018/19 program year saw a return to increased overall payments and continued increase in the per-case payments. Most significantly, the cumulative total of payments crossed the \$4 billion threshold since the service started in 1988.

Achieving these outcomes is the result of ‘doing the right things, the right way’. The ‘right things’ often start with communications. From the point of contact with a parent seeking enrolment information to the correspondence with an employer to facilitate wage-deduction payments, the ability of clients and staff to connect is essential. This year saw further increases in our web services, with many new web accounts established by both paying and recipient clients. The FMEP website is now one of the most used sites in the public sector with 1.7 million visits this year. The ability to give and get information through the website offers an invaluable alternative to our existing phone service. Lest we think that the telephone is going away, we should note that over 380,000 calls were received and made during the year. Taken together, the FMEP connects with clients as and when needed.

The range of enforcement measures, when required, remains extensive. At any given time, around 160,000 individual administrative enforcement measures are active on all cases where the paying parent lives in British Columbia. In most cases, these measures achieve the desired outcome of recovering the payments that are due.

For the first time in several years, the number of new and re-enrolled cases increased. Re-enrolled cases had been withdrawn at a previous time, but clients had sought additional services. While these cases did not exceed the number of cases withdrawn during the year, they did slow the rate of caseload decrease. These numbers suggest that the long, slow decline in caseload may be reaching an end.

The year also marked the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the FMEP. For many families, the program has recovered support payments that otherwise would not have been received. The changes over the last 30 years have been immense, from the number of staff and cases through to the way that we manage our work. What hasn’t changed is the care and commitment, and the continuing drive to do the right things, and to do them the right way.

Chris Beresford  
Director of Maintenance Enforcement  
December 2019

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## FMEP OPERATING PRINCIPLES

FMEP work is based on the following operating principles.

- A key goal of FMEP is to ensure that the terms of maintenance orders and agreements are fulfilled.
- FMEP is authorized to facilitate the collection of child support and spousal payments in accordance with the BC *Family Maintenance Enforcement Act (FMEA)*.
- FMEP is not authorized to mediate or counsel clients with respect to court orders or agreements.
- The focus of FMEP is to ensure that children and families receive the maintenance that they are entitled to.
- When working with payors FMEP staff encourages voluntary payment of maintenance orders or agreements.
- In case where voluntary payment fails, emphasis will be given to enforcement through administrative (non-court) means whenever possible.
- FMEP staff strive for a good working relationship with all payors and recipients, and treats all clients with respect.
- The FMEP supports clients through communication tools that allow clients easy access to case and FMEP information.



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## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

2018-2019 marked the 30<sup>th</sup> year of operations for FMEP. This was the sixth year in a row that the FMEP collected over \$200 million. Since its inception in 1988, the FMEP has collected nearly \$4.1 billion for British Columbia families.

Highlights for the year include:

### **Payment**

- Payments received increased by just under \$600,000 dollars over the previous year.
- Total collected: \$214.5 million.
- Sixth consecutive year collecting \$200 million or more.

### **Caseload**

- Overall drop in the caseload of just over 1,300 cases.
- Government fee-only cases remained stable at just over 700.

### **Clients**

- As of March 31, 2019, there were 123,693 clients enrolled in the FMEP (recipients, payors and children).
- The FMEP provided support to over 53,000 children in 2018-2019. More than half of these children are over the age of 14.
- The number of payors in receipt of income assistance remained at just over 4,600 cases – which represents 14.2 percent of in-BC cases.

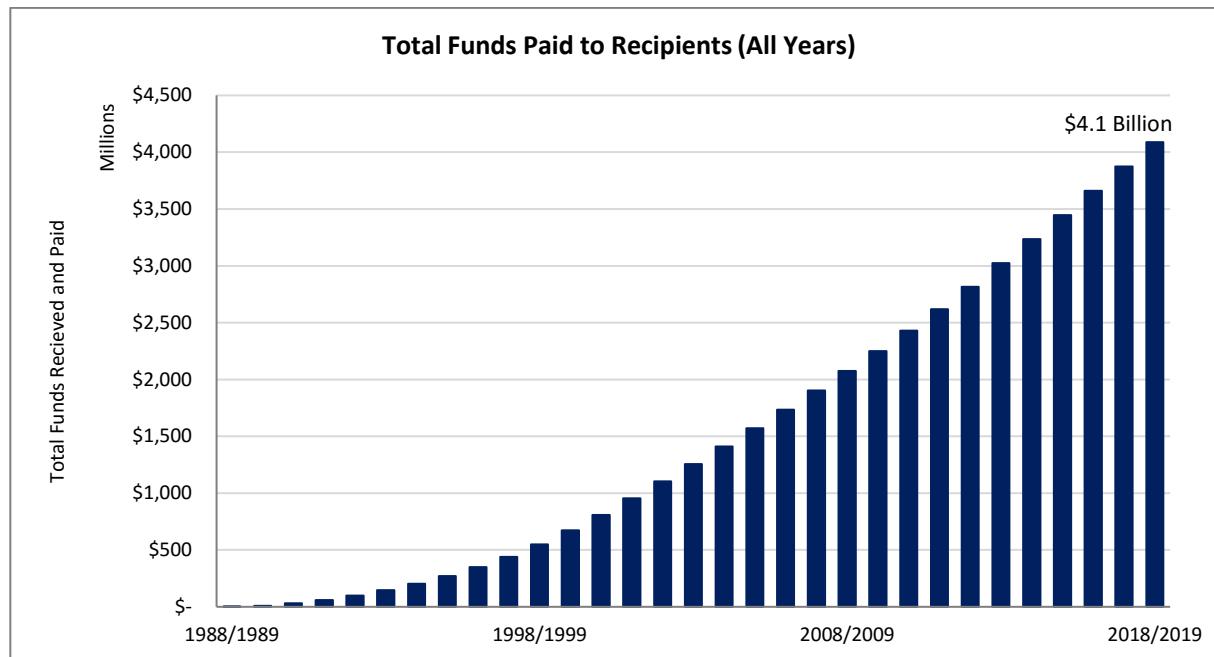
### **Operations**

- The FMEP continues to work on innovative and time saving ways for payments to be received and distributed. The FMEP has now fully implemented a new process that allows attachees (such as employers) to make electronic payments when they receive notice of attachments (garnishments). This ensures that clients receive their payments efficiently.
- The FMEP also explored new options to speed up communication between clients and staff. These enhancements lower the number of letters that need to be printed and provides clients with faster communication. This benefits clients and the FMEP which saves on printing and mailing costs as well as having a positive impact on the environment.

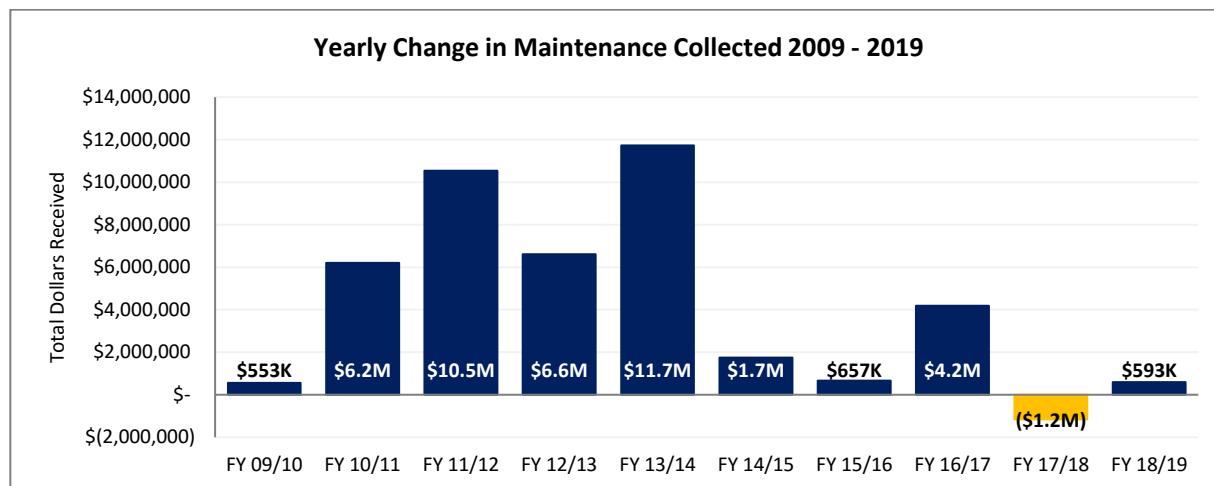
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## FAMILY SUPPORT OUTCOMES

Over \$214.5 million was collected in 2018-2019; the sixth consecutive year over \$200 million. Overall, the FMEP has collected nearly \$4.1 billion.



The FMEP collected almost \$600,000 dollars more than the previous year. The year over year change in collections for the past ten years is shown in the chart below.



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## COLLECTION ON RECIPROCAL CASES

The FMEP has reciprocal agreements with;

- **Canada** – all of the provinces and territories;
- **United States of America** – all of the United States, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa and the US Virgin Islands;
- **Pacific Ocean** – Australia, Fiji, New Zealand (including the Cook Islands), Papua New Guinea;
- **Europe** – Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Norway, Slovak Republic, Swiss Confederation, Gibraltar, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;
- **Caribbean** – Barbados and its Dependencies;
- **Africa** – South Africa, Zimbabwe; and
- **Asia** – Hong Kong, Republic of Singapore.

These are cases where one of the parents resides in a different jurisdiction. In 2018-2019, just under \$32 million was received on these cases. This was comprised of \$17.6 million received from other jurisdictions (cases where the support payor resided outside of British Columbia) and \$14.4 million collected by the FMEP for families that lived outside of British Columbia.

### **Canada**

In Canada, Alberta remains the largest single reciprocal partner. British Columbia and Alberta share 3,527 cases (53.2 percent of all domestic cases) – and together, the programs collected just under \$16 million in 2018-2019. British Columbia collected \$6.1 million for families living in Alberta, and Alberta collected \$9.8 million for families living in British Columbia. The disparity is a result of the large caseload difference between the jurisdictions – more paying parents live in Alberta.

Overall in the past ten years, Canadian jurisdictions working with British Columbia have collected over \$321.9 million (\$194.2 million for families in British Columbia and \$127.7 million distributed to other Canadian jurisdictions).

### **United States**

The United States is the largest international partner for British Columbia. Washington State continues to be the largest single state partner with some 221 cases. Combined collections with US partners was \$3.62 million in 2018-2019. Collections with Washington State were 27.3 percent of the overall total.

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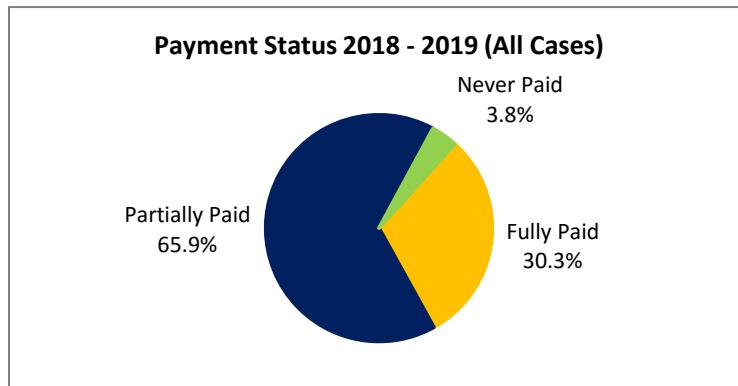
## International

International cases (not including United States) comprise a small percentage of the overall FMEP caseload – just 2.8 percent of reciprocal cases. In 2018-2019 these cases received just under \$500,000 and over the past five years generated over \$4.8 million.

## COLLECTION RATES AND ARREARS

The FMEP uses a number of key performance metrics to monitor payments. One of those is the percentage of enrolled cases which have received a payment during the year. This figure remains very consistent (as noted in the chart below) and shows that the vast majority of cases enrolled in the FMEP can expect to receive a payment.

In addition, the FMEP monitors whether or not cases are fully complied with (case has no arrears), partially complied with (case has arrears but has received some payment since enrolment) or have never received a payment. In 2018-2019 more than 30 percent of all cases were fully paid, receiving ongoing payments each month and having no arrears. Just under 66 percent of cases are partially paid and have some level of arrears.



Only 3.8 percent of cases have never received a payment. This figure includes cases which are enrolled with non-reciprocating jurisdictions (the paying parent lives outside British Columbia in a country that does not reciprocate enforcement for child/spousal maintenance). British Columbia enrolls all cases where there is a valid maintenance order, even when the paying parent lives outside British Columbia in a non-reciprocating jurisdiction. These cases have unique challenges as the FMEP cannot issue enforcement outside of British Columbia. The FMEP uses a team of specialized enforcement staff who negotiate and work with payors to gain compliance. In 2018-2019 they did manage to obtain over 28 percent of the maintenance due on these non-reciprocal cases.

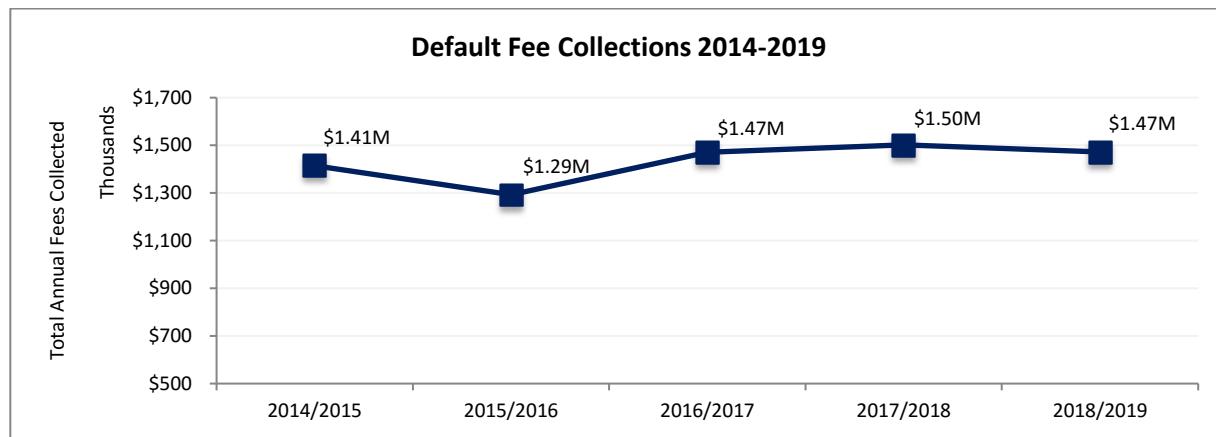
## FEE RECOVERY FOR GOVERNMENT

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.

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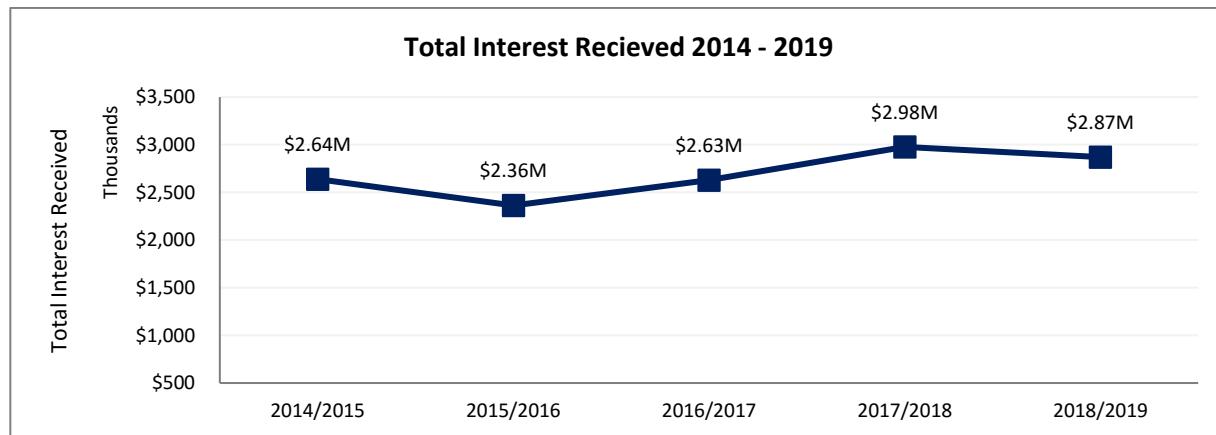
These default fees are collected only after all maintenance owed to the recipient, including arrears and interest, is paid in full.

In 2018-2019 just over \$1.47 million was collected from default fees. Over the past five years the FMEP has collected just under \$7.2 million in default fees as shown in the table below. Collection of these fees help offset the cost of the FMEP and ensure that the FMEP remains highly cost efficient.



## INTEREST

Since 1997, British Columbia has added interest to outstanding balances. This is done to ensure that all debt obligations are treated equally. In 2018-2019 the FMEP collected and distributed nearly \$2.9 million in interest. In the past decade the FMEP has collected over \$25.5 million in interest payments for British Columbia families.



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## FMEP CASES

This section provides an overview of the FMEP caseload – the number of cases enrolled, where those cases are located, and a breakdown of the cases by type (whether the cases involve parents who reside outside British Columbia or the cases are government fee-only cases).

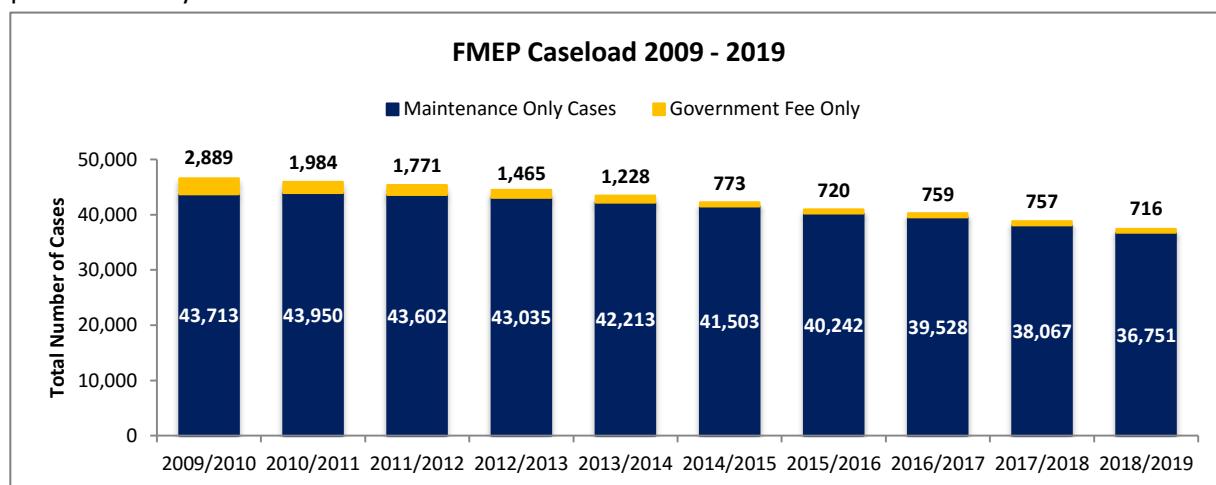
### OVERVIEW

The FMEP caseload was relatively stable for many years, however, starting in 2011-2012 the annual number of new enrolments began to drop. As new enrolments fell, the number of cases being withdrawn remained fairly constant. As a result, the overall caseload has declined.

In 2018-2019 the FMEP finished the year with 36,751 maintenance cases and 709 government fee-only cases. This is an overall drop of 1,316 maintenance cases (about 3.5 percent) and a drop of five government fee-only cases from the end of the previous fiscal year.

### FAMILY SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT CASES

The FMEP handles two types of cases – maintenance enforcement cases and government fee-only cases. Maintenance enforcement cases are those where the FMEP is enforcing child and/or spousal maintenance, also known as “family support”. Government cases are those where the FMEP is enforcing for any government fees or penalties that have been issued to a maintenance payor. The chart below shows the FMEP caseload (both maintenance and government fee-only cases) for the past ten fiscal years.



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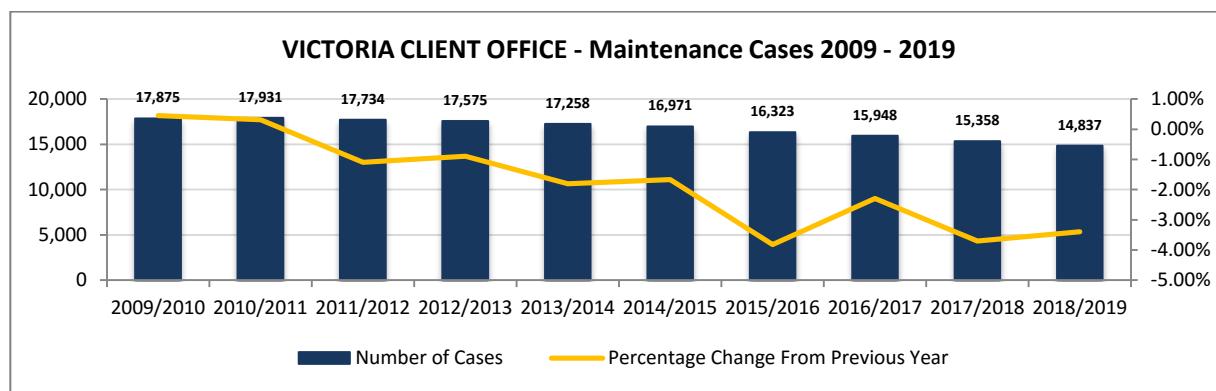
## GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF CASES

The FMEP maintains three regional offices in British Columbia, located in the cities of Victoria, Burnaby and Kamloops. Generally, cases in the FMEP are managed by the office located closest to the court where the maintenance order or agreement is filed.

### **Victoria Client Office**

The Victoria Client Office is the largest office in the FMEP. The Victoria location houses not only a regular maintenance caseload team, but also a specialized enforcement team that deals with interjurisdictional cases (those where one of the parents lives outside of British Columbia). Victoria is also the central location for all payment processing – Payment Services – and also houses the Enrolment Office.

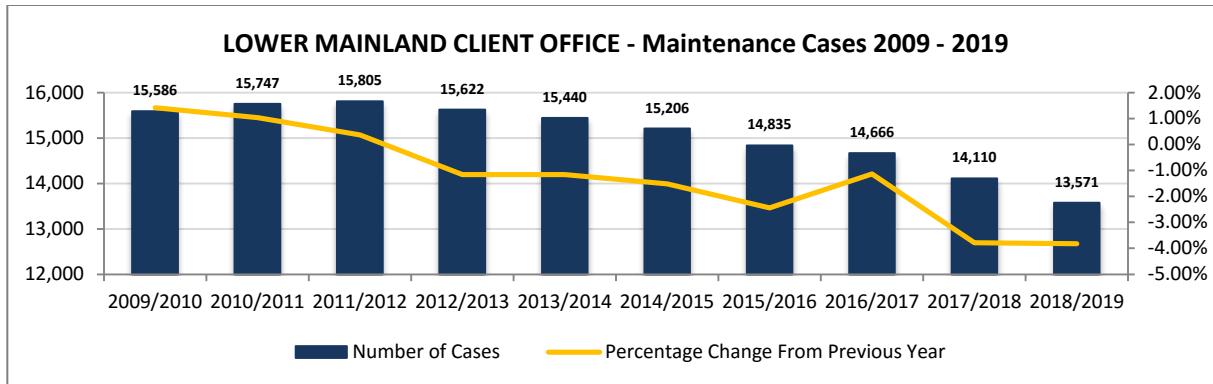
At the end of 2018-2019, the office was responsible for 14,837 maintenance cases. This was down slightly from the previous year by just under 3.4 percent. The chart below shows the caseload for the past ten fiscal years.



### **Lower Mainland Client Office**

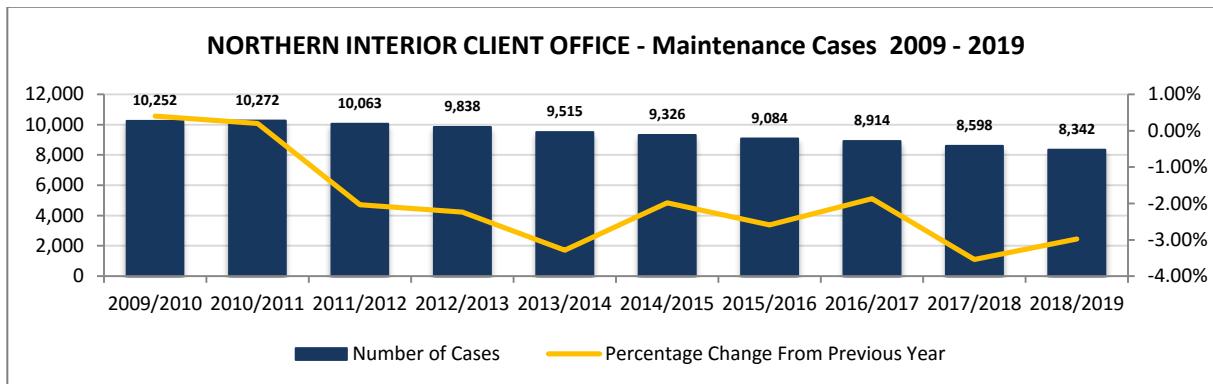
The Lower Mainland Client Office is situated in Burnaby and serves the populations of Metro Vancouver, the Fraser Valley and the Sunshine Coast. At the end of fiscal year 2018-2019, the office was responsible for 13,571 maintenance cases, down just over 3.8 percent from the previous year. The following chart shows the caseload for the past ten fiscal years.

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## Northern/ Interior Client Office

The Northern/ Interior Client Office is located in Kamloops. The office handles most cases that are located to the east and north of the Lower Mainland Client Office. As of March 31, 2019 the office had 8,342 maintenance cases – down just under 3 percent from the previous year. The chart below shows the caseload for this office for the past ten fiscal years.



## RECIPROCAL CASES

Reciprocal cases are maintenance cases in which either the support recipient or the support payment reside outside the province of British Columbia. These cases make up a significant portion of the overall FMEP caseload – just under 21 percent.

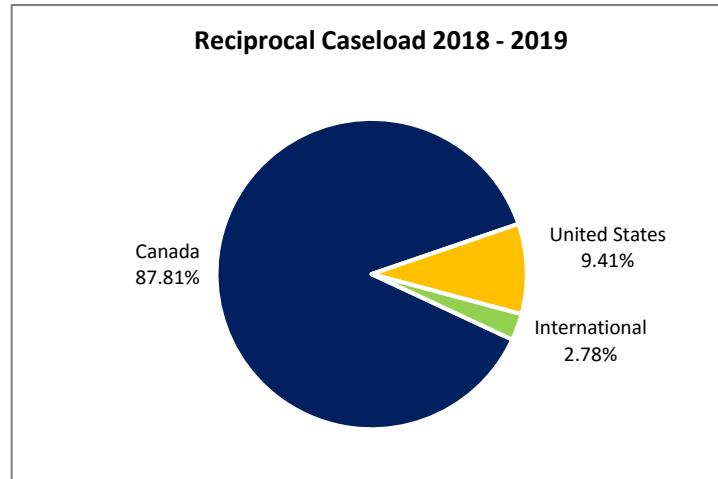
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The FMEP has reciprocal agreements throughout the world. These agreements commit each province, state or country to enforce maintenance orders to ensure that children and families receive their support no matter where they live.

As of March 31, 2019 the FMEP had 7,664 reciprocal cases. This is down slightly from the previous year when the year ended with 7,946 reciprocal cases (about 3.5 percent).

The majority of reciprocal cases are domestic where one parent resides in British Columbia and the other parent resides elsewhere in Canada. These cases make up just under 88 percent of the reciprocal caseload. Cases

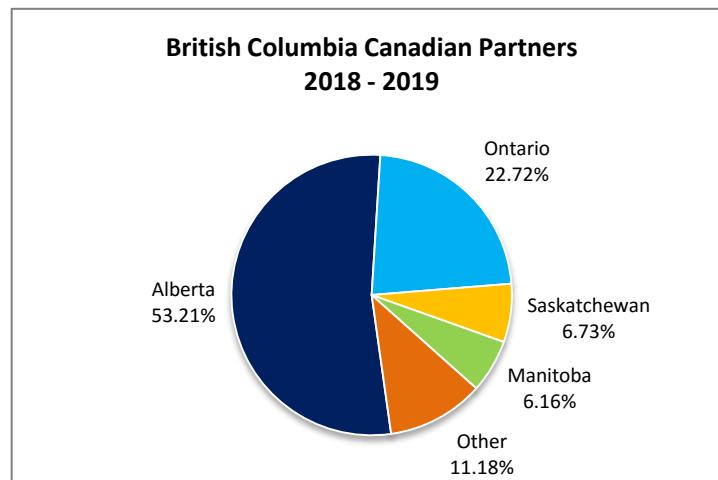
involving the United States make up the next largest single group, accounting for 9.4 percent of the reciprocal caseload. International (non-U.S.) cases make up just under 2.8 percent of the overall reciprocal caseload.



## Canadian Caseload

Domestic reciprocal cases make up the majority of cases handled by the specialized Interjurisdictional Support Order team located in the Victoria Regional Client Office. As noted above, nearly 88 percent of all reciprocal cases have a parent living elsewhere in Canada.

The domestic caseload totaled 6,621 cases as of March 31, 2019. This was down just over 3.9 percent (271 cases) over the previous year. The domestic caseload has experienced a large decline over the past decade, dropping by 17.2 percent (1,380 cases). This is a much higher rate than any other caseload in the FMEP. These figures



66% of all Canadian reciprocal cases are from the western provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

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however, are consistent with patterns seen in other Canadian jurisdictions that are also experiencing caseload declines.

The majority of cases enrolled domestically come from western Canada. Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba account for nearly 66 percent of all domestic cases. The province of Alberta alone is the largest single partner accounting for over 53 percent of the domestic caseload.

Individual breakdown of the caseload is provided below.

Canadian Caseload by Province 2018 - 2019 (All Cases)			
Province	Cases	Province	Cases
ALBERTA	3,527	NUNAVUT	2
MANITOBA	408	ONTARIO	1,508
NEW BRUNSWICK	103	PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND	23
NEWFOUNDLAND	101	QUEBEC	186
NOVA SCOTIA	195	SASKATCHEWAN	446
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES	41	YUKON	90

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## International Cases – United States

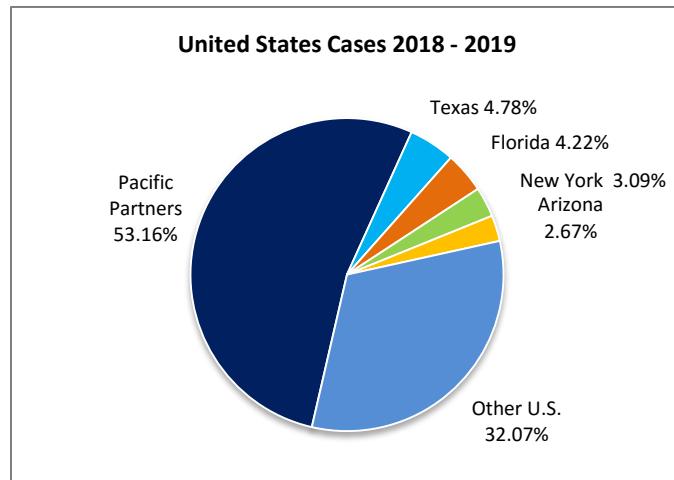
The largest single partner outside of Canada is the United States. As of March 31, 2019 just under 9.3 percent (711 cases) of the reciprocal caseload were cases shared with the United States. This was down 3.8 percent from the previous year a loss of 28 cases.

The table below shows the breakdown by state for reciprocal cases between British Columbia and the United States.

United States Caseload by State 2018 - 2019 (All Cases)					
State	# Cases	State	# Cases	State	# Cases
ALABAMA	2	KENTUCKY	1	NORTH DAKOTA	4
<b>ALASKA*</b>	<b>15</b>	LOUISIANA	1	OHIO	14
ARIZONA	19	MAINE	3	OKLAHOMA	5
ARKANSAS	4	MARYLAND	6	<b>OREGON*</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>CALIFORNIA*</b>	<b>95</b>	MASSACHUSETTS	8	PENNSYLVANIA	9
COLORADO	14	MICHIGAN	17	RHODE ISLAND	1
CONNECTICUT	4	MINNESOTA	10	SOUTH CAROLINA	2
DELAWARE	0	MISSISSIPPI	3	SOUTH DAKOTA	0
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	3	MISSOURI	12	TENNESSEE	7
FLORIDA	30	MONTANA	9	TEXAS	34
GEORGIA	8	NEBRASKA	4	UTAH	9
<b>HAWAII*</b>	<b>15</b>	NEVADA	15	VERMONT	0
IDAHO	8	NEW HAMPSHIRE	2	VIRGINIA	6
ILLINOIS	3	NEW JERSEY	2	<b>WASHINGTON*</b>	<b>221</b>
INDIANA	10	NEW MEXICO	3	WEST VIRGINIA	2
IOWA	4	NEW YORK	22	WISCONSIN	4
KANSAS	4	NORTH CAROLINA	3	WYOMING	2

\*Pacific Partner

The majority of U.S. cases originate from jurisdictions that are geographically close to British Columbia. These “Pacific Partners” comprise the five U.S. states of Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington State. More than 53 percent of cases (as shown in the chart) come from these five jurisdictions. This pattern has been very consistent since the FMEP started tracking this data.



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## International Cases – Other Countries

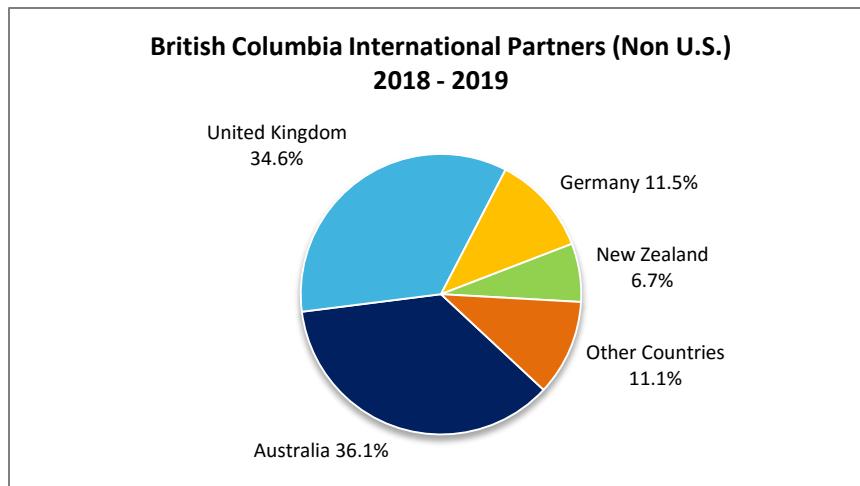
Cases involving a country other than the United States made up just under 2.8 percent (208 cases) of the reciprocal caseload as of March 31, 2019.

Although this caseload is small, it has in the past decade grown by 24.6 percent (up 41 cases). In May 2017, Canada became an official signatory to the *Hague Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance* (2007). This multilateral treaty provides for the enforcement of child (and other forms of family support) between signatory countries.

The chart below shows the number of cases, as of March 31, 2019, enrolled with international partners.

International Caseload 2018 - 2019 (Non U.S.)			
Country	Cases	Country	Cases
AUSTRALIA	75	HONG KONG	4
AUSTRIA	2	NEW ZEALAND	14
CZECH REPUBLIC	4	NORWAY	1
GERMANY	24	SINGAPORE	1
FIJI	1	SLOVAKIA	4
UNITED KINGDOM	65	SOUTH AFRICA	3
SCOTLAND	7	SWITZERLAND	3

An interesting fact from the non-U.S. international caseload is that most cases originate from members of the Commonwealth Nations. Australia and the United Kingdom alone account for 70.7 percent of all non-U.S. international cases.



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## GOVERNMENT FEE CASES

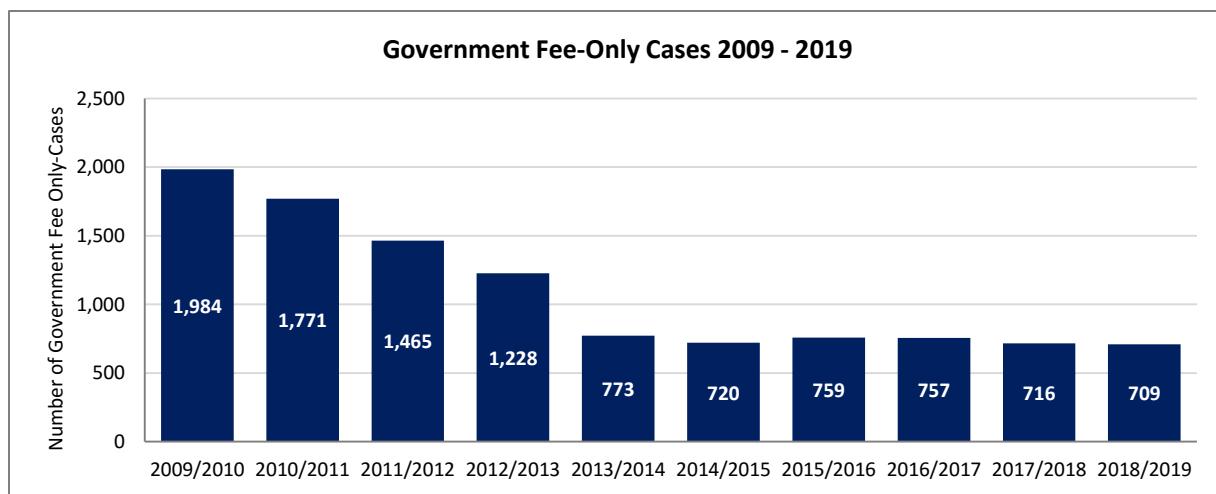
Government fee-only cases are those cases where the FMEP is only collecting a fee owed to the government of British Columbia. The fee is collected after all maintenance owing to the recipient has been paid; this includes unpaid support and interest.

Currently, there is only one type of fee charged – a default fee is charged when the payor misses or is late with a payment twice or more in the same year.

A Default Fee is:

- Charged once a year;
- Equal to one month's maintenance to a maximum of \$400;
- Forwarded to the government of British Columbia to cover the costs of operating the FMEP.

The number of fee-only cases is very small. They represent less than two percent of the overall FMEP caseload. As seen in the chart below the caseload has remained relatively stable over the past ten fiscal years.

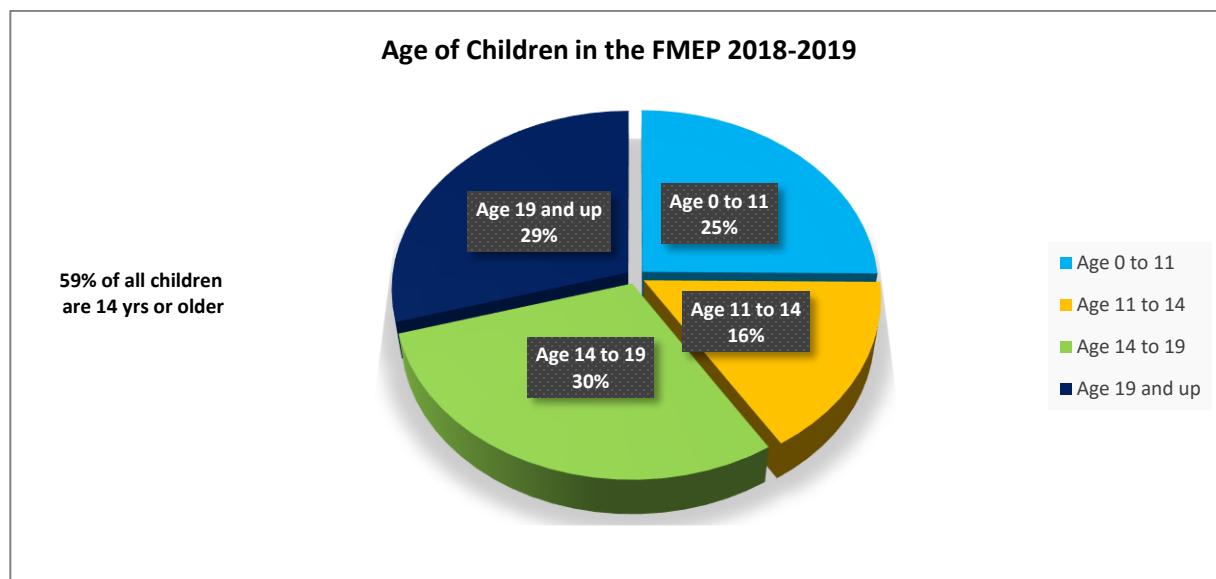


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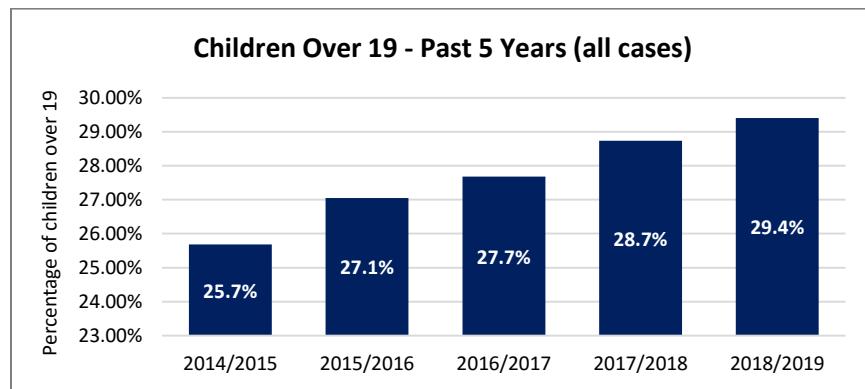
## FMEP CLIENTS

### CHILDREN

The FMEP is a program that provides services largely to families with older children. As of March 31, 2019 over 59 percent of children in the FMEP are over the age of 14. The FMEP provides an important function as it ensures that children over the age of majority (age 19 in British Columbia) are able to complete their secondary and post-secondary schooling. The chart below shows the age breakdown of children in the FMEP.



Children over the age of majority is one of the faster growing categories – over the past 5 years this cohort has gone from just under 26 percent of all children to over 29 percent.

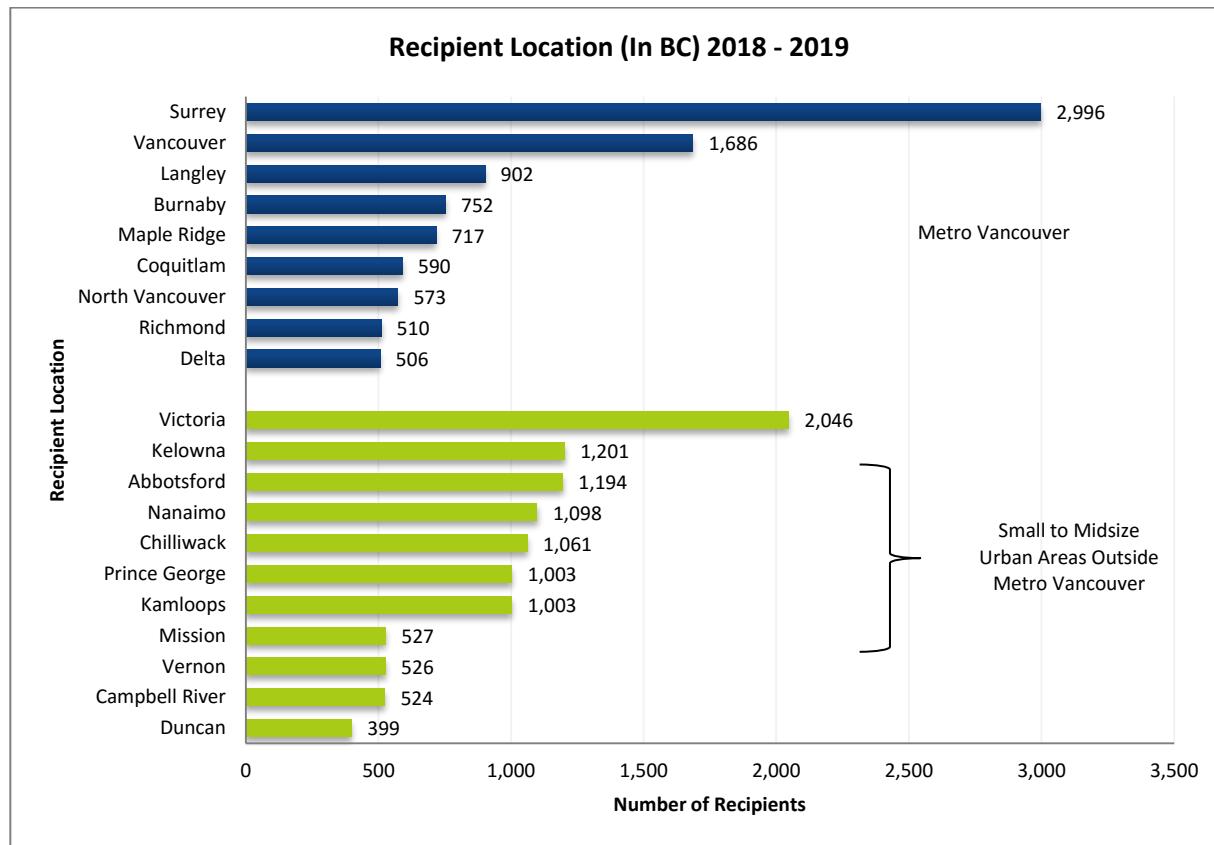


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## RECIPIENTS

As of March 31, 2019 there were 35,611 recipients collecting child and/or spousal support enrolled in the FMEP.

The graph below shows that most recipients tend to live in the large to midsize urban areas of British Columbia. Around 31.7 percent of all recipients live in Metro Vancouver. This has declined over the years when more than one third of all recipients were in Metro Vancouver.



\*chart represents 61.5 percent of all in BC recipients - remaining 38.5 percent live in small towns or rural areas.

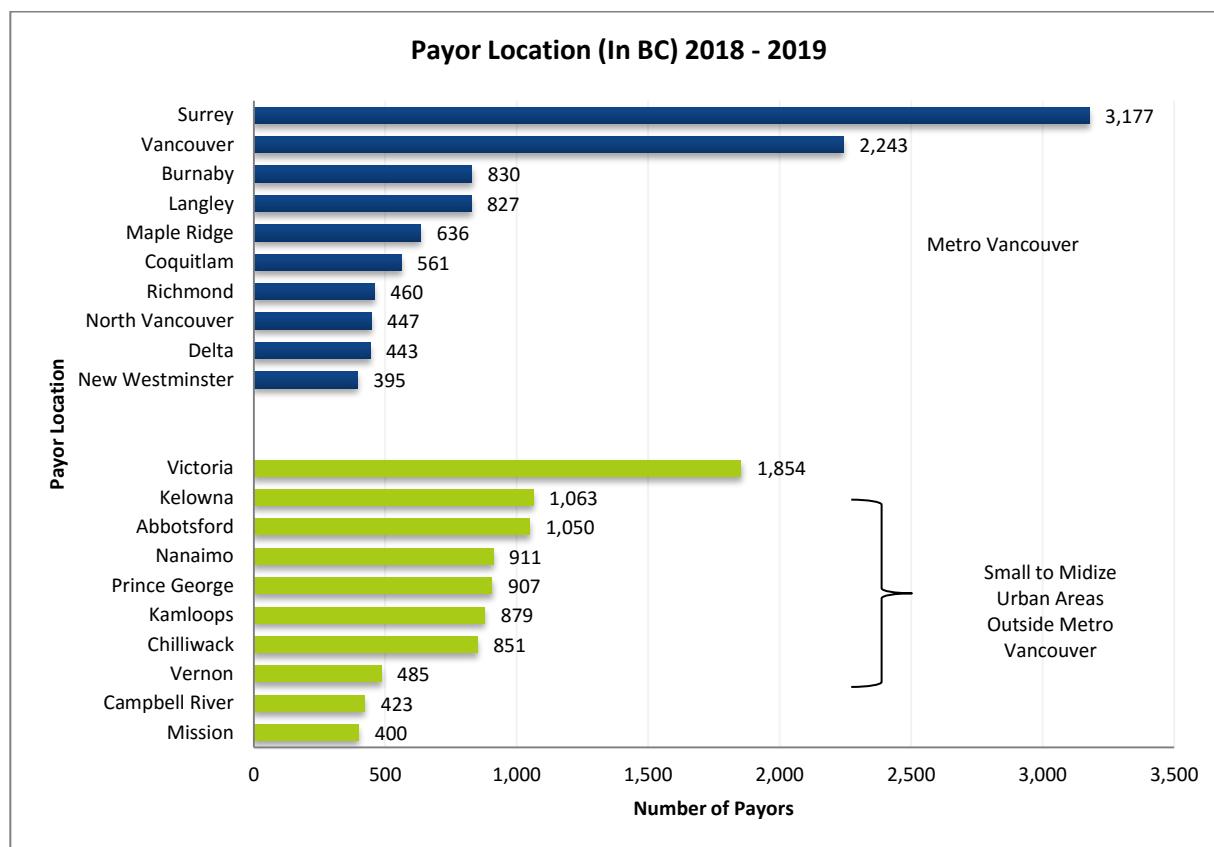
The average age of a recipient is 44.5 years old, which is not surprising since the majority of children enrolled in the FMEP are in their teenage years.

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## PAYORS

As of March 31, 2019 there were 35,014 payors enrolled in the FMEP. 1,636 of them had more than one actively enrolled case. As the overall caseload has declined the number of payors with multiple files has also declined.

The majority of payors – as do recipients – live in the larger urban areas of British Columbia. Around 58 percent of payors live in the mid to large sized centres. One third of all payors live in Metro Vancouver – slightly higher than the recipient population. 16.7 percent of payors live in the cities of Surrey and Vancouver. The breakdown of payor location is shown in the graph below.



\*represents 58 percent of payors – remaining 42 percent live in small towns and rural areas or their address is currently unknown.

The average age of a payor is just over 47 years old, slightly older than recipients (44.5 yr.).

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## Payors in Receipt of Income Assistance

The FMEP records the number of payors in receipt of income assistance. This number is an important metric as these are generally cases where the payor is unable to provide ongoing support payments for his or her family.

Over the past five years the number of payors on income assistance has remained stable however as a percentage of the overall caseload they have been increasing. Over 14.2 percent of payors in British Columbia are in receipt of income assistance.

Fiscal Year	Number of Payors	Percentage of Payors in BC on IA	Change From Previous Year
2014/2015	4,360	11.96%	⬇️ 0.17%
2015/2016	4,635	13.05%	⬆️ 1.09%
2016/2017	4,639	13.33%	⬆️ 0.28%
2017/2018	4,607	13.70%	⬆️ 0.37%
2018/2019	4,620	14.22%	⬆️ 0.52%

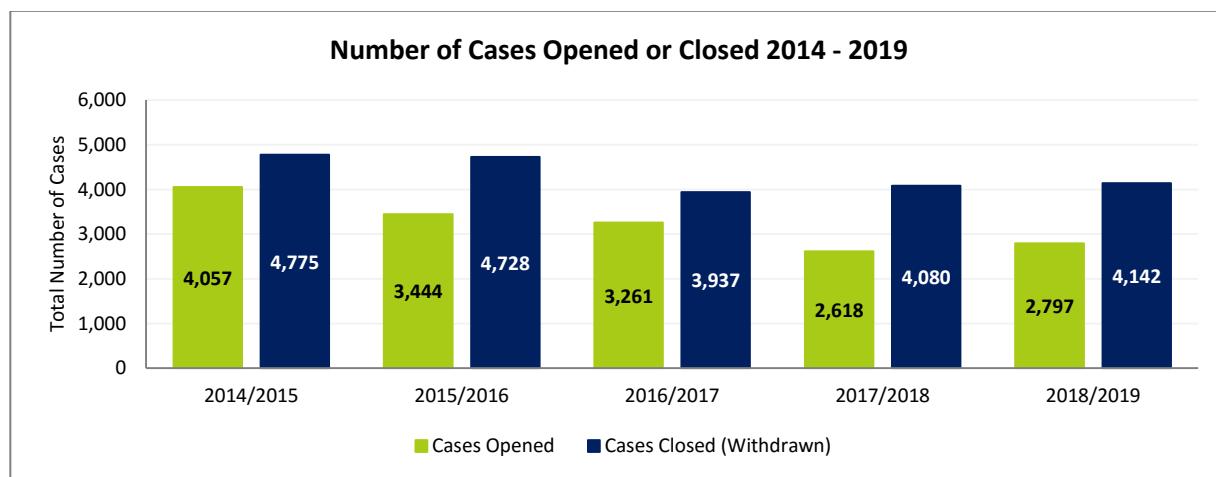
Of particular concern to the FMEP is that these clients generally fall further and further in to arrears as they are not able to pay the court ordered maintenance. Although these clients do have the option of applying to the court to vary the order they often face both personal barriers such as food insecurity and lack of a stable address, as well as systemic barriers such as a complex application process, lack of legal aid, or the inability to afford a lawyer to assist in the process.

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## PROGRAM OPERATIONS

### ENROLMENT

The FMEP caseload is driven by two main factors – the number of new cases requesting enrolment each year and the number of cases being closed or withdrawn. The past five years of cases opening and closing are shown in the chart below.



Cases are closed because the children have become adults and the maintenance is fully paid, because both parents have moved outside of British Columbia, or because the recipient of maintenance has decided to receive support directly from the paying parent and no longer requires the assistance of the FMEP.

Over the past ten years, the FMEP has had fewer new cases requesting enrolment. Enrolment dropped substantially after May 2015, when the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction eliminated the mandatory enrolment of clients in receipt of income assistance. Since then enrolment has stabilized. 2018-2019 was the first year in the past ten where the number of new or re-enrolled cases increased over the preceding year.

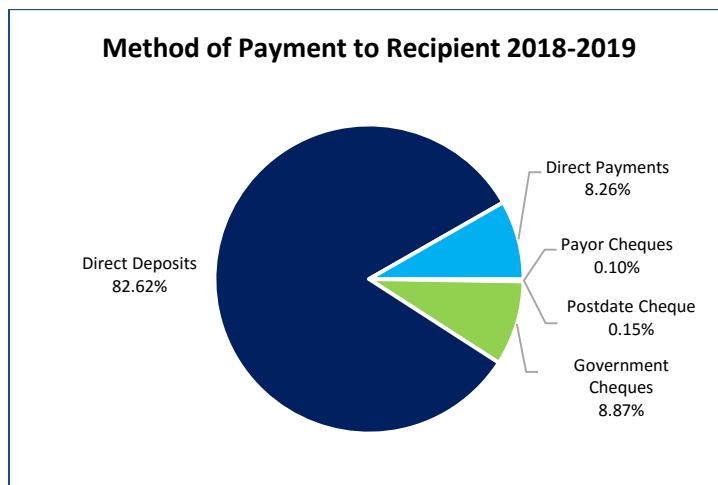
### PAYMENT PROCESSING

The FMEP processed an average of 38,697 individual payments each month in 2018-2019. Over the past five years the FMEP has processed over five million payments, an average of 500,000 per year.

Looking back over the past 30 years, the way payments are received and processed is one of the areas that has exhibited the largest change. When the FMEP began in 1988, all payments were received

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either by cheque, cash or money order. In addition, some clients were allowed to accept direct payments. In the past year, most payments were received electronically and distributed electronically. The FMEP has invested in e-payments and over 96 percent of all eligible recipients are enrolled in direct deposit. Issuing fewer paper cheques and using less mail results in faster payment turn around, and is better for clients and the environment. The chart below shows how payments were distributed to clients in the last completed year.



## ENFORCEMENT

Payors do pay. In 2018-2019, more than 60 percent of all funds reported and received by the FMEP were paid direct by the paying parent. These payments were either by personal cheque, direct payment to the recipient, or using one of the FMEP electronic banking options. These payments were made, often due to parents maintaining strong relationships after separation or divorce, but the extensive work performed by enforcement staff, negotiating voluntary agreements with payors to repay arrears and commit to long-term stable payments is clearly a key factor. The hard work and dedication of the enforcement teams is illustrated by the number of payments processed by the FMEP every year.

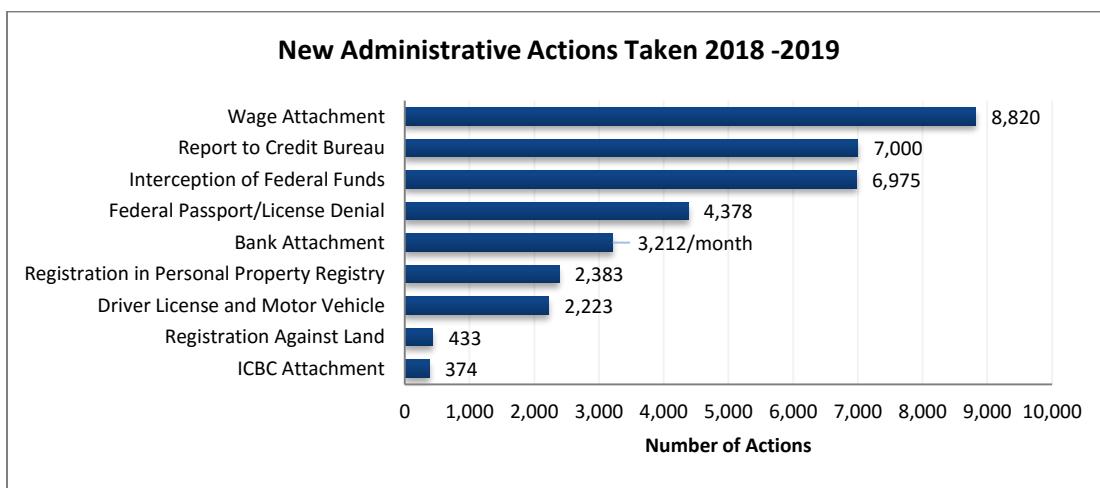
The remaining 40 percent of all funds received by the FMEP involved some sort of administrative and/or court enforcement action taken by FMEP staff. Unfortunately there is no way for the FMEP to tie specific funds to every enforcement action. Some actions can span years – as in the case of land registration or seizure of property or assets.

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## ADMINISTRATIVE ENFORCEMENT

As noted previously, the FMEP works first to negotiate and attempt voluntary arrangement with the paying parent. Negotiation of payments to cover the ongoing maintenance and arrears is a cornerstone of the client-centric focus of the FMEP. Where negotiation and voluntary arrangements do not work, the FMEP may initiate a variety of administrative actions to collect the outstanding arrears.

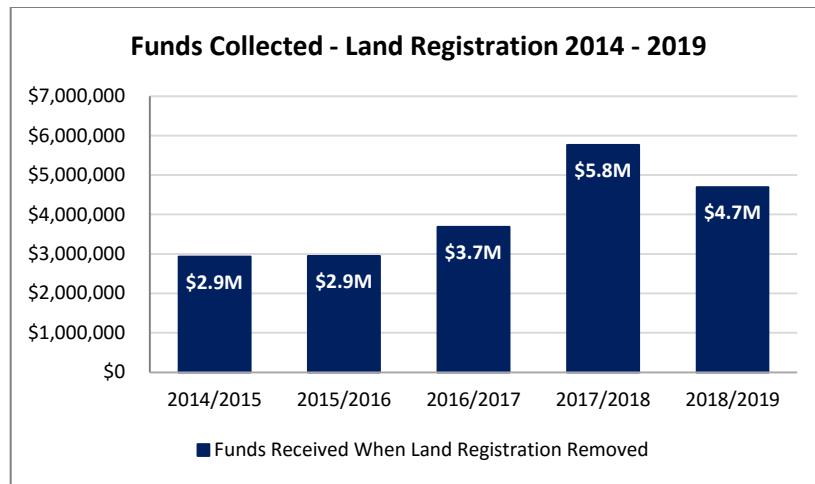
Cases that are not in compliance are reviewed regularly by a dedicated enforcement officer. The enforcement officer will review the case, attempt to negotiate and contact the paying parent. The chart below shows the most common administrative actions that the FMEP undertook in 2018-2019.



Land values in the Province of British Columbia have risen at a significant rate over the past decade. One action that the FMEP can take is to place a lien on personal or business property that a payor has an interest in. During the past five years, the FMEP has collected over \$20 million when those liens were removed. The following chart shows the amounts collected over the past five years.

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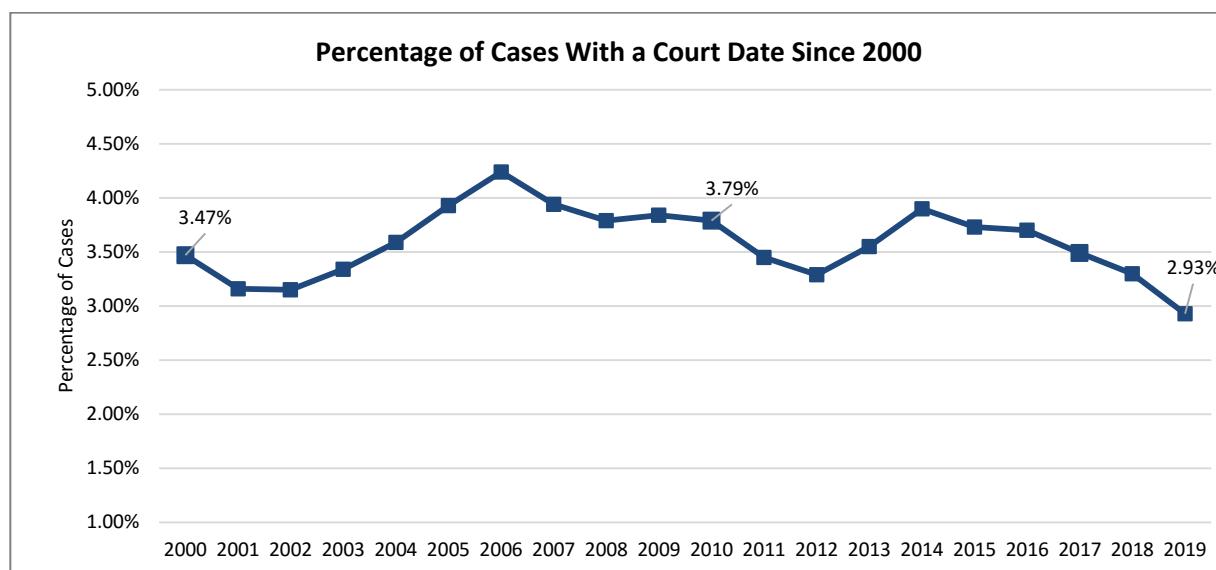
Over \$4.7 million was collected during 2018-2019 and over \$20 million in the past five years from land enforcement.



## COURT ENFORCEMENT

When both negotiation/voluntary compliance and administrative enforcement are unsuccessful, and the FMEP believes the payor has the capacity to pay, the FMEP may initiate a hearing in a British Columbia court to ask the payor to explain why he or she has not paid the amount required under the maintenance order.

Given the limited court time available as well as the significant resources and costs involved in court actions, very few FMEP cases are taken to court each year. As noted in the following chart, the overall percentage of cases with court dates has remained relatively stable since the late 1990s – at between three and four percent of the caseload.



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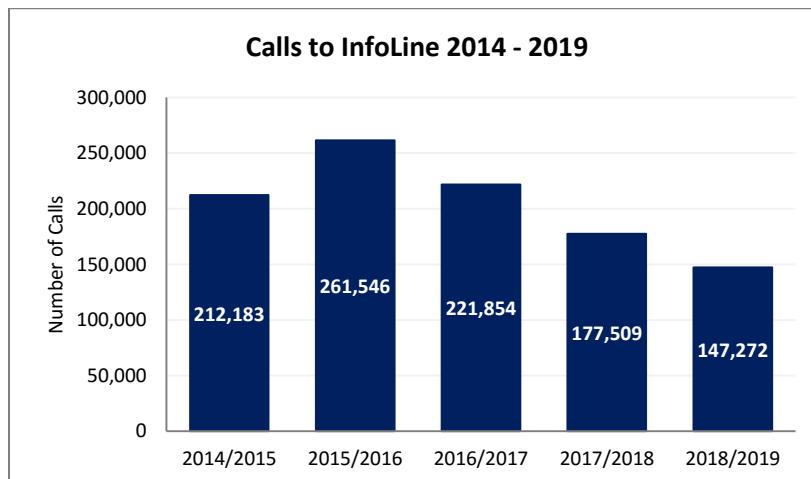
## CLIENT SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The FMEP places a high priority on ensuring clients receive excellent customer service. This commitment ensures that clients are able to obtain information regarding their case in a timely fashion. To respond to the needs of a diverse clientele, the FMEP has created four core services that combined, provide barrier free access. This covers general program information, specific case details, enforcement and payment information.

### InfoLine

The InfoLine is an automated telephone system that provides clients with up-to-date enforcement and payment information as well as providing payors with quick access to their enforcement officer and a callback service. The service was designed based on client and staff feedback.

Usage of the InfoLine service grew after the initial implementation but has declined for the past few years as clients chose to move towards FMEP web-based services. InfoLine usage figures for the past five years are shown below.

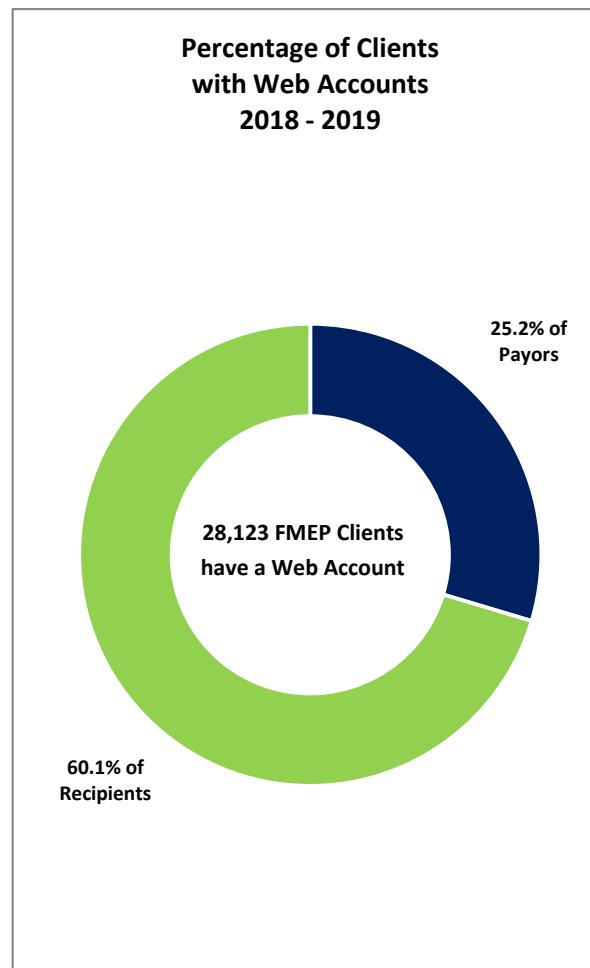
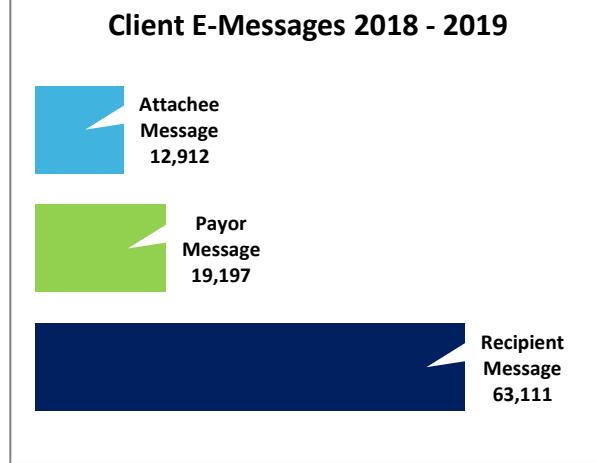
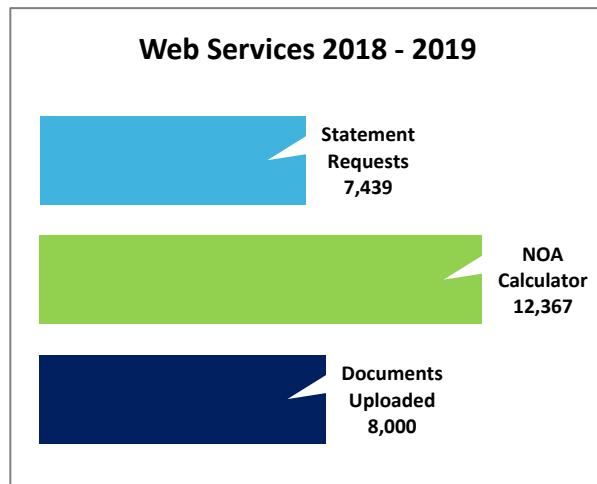
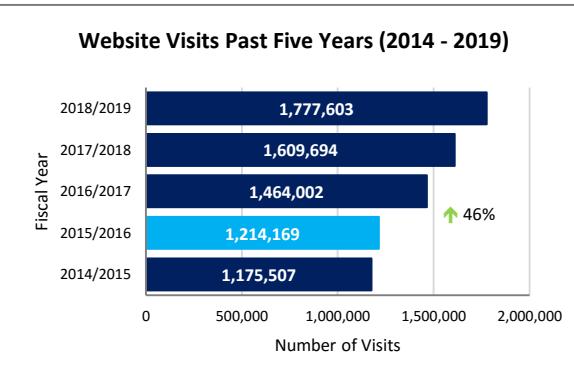


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## FMEP Website

The FMEP website was redesigned in April 2015. Since then, overall traffic has increased over 46 percent. Additional changes were made to make the site mobile friendly in 2016.

More and more FMEP clients are using the web to obtain the information they need regarding their case. Over 60 percent of recipients now have web accounts – over one quarter, or 25.2 percent, of payors are also receiving services online. This is a marked increase from 2015 when only 10 percent of payors used the FMEP website.

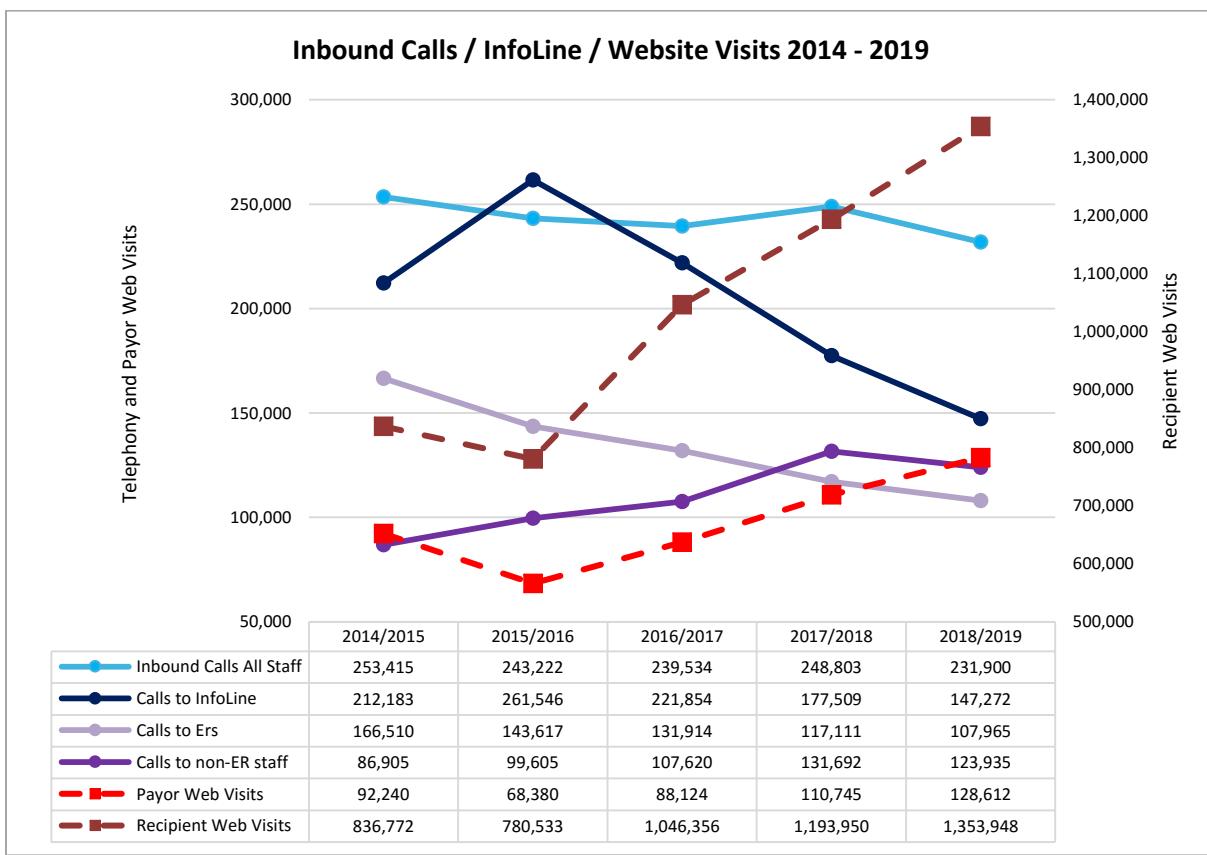


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## FMEP Call Centres

The FMEP operates three call centres, one in each of the regional offices. Overall call volumes have declined in all three regional offices. This is a result of two factors – first, the overall decline in the caseload and secondly, as clients chose to use web services options for communicating with the FMEP instead of contacting our call centres.

The strong increase in clients choosing to use the website over traditional telephony services is quite pronounced since the FMEP launched the new version of the website in 2015. The chart below shows the strong uptick in clients (particularly recipients) using the FMEP website and the corresponding declines in the telephony-based services.



Overall call answer times in the FMEP remained consistently low – with average speed of answer under two minutes (1min 46s) for 2018-2019.

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## **Comprehensive Child Support Service (CCSS)**

Since 2000, the FMEP has operated an outreach program in conjunction with the Family Justice Services division of the Ministry of Attorney General. This has provided an opportunity for the two services to work together in assisting mutual clients who need assistance obtaining/changing court orders or repaying their arrears. In addition, this service ensures that the FMEP has a means of providing access to all clients, particularly those in marginalized populations with barriers to telephone or web communication who may require an in-person appointment.

The FMEP operates this service from four locations: Vancouver, Surrey (West Fraser), Kelowna and Nanaimo.

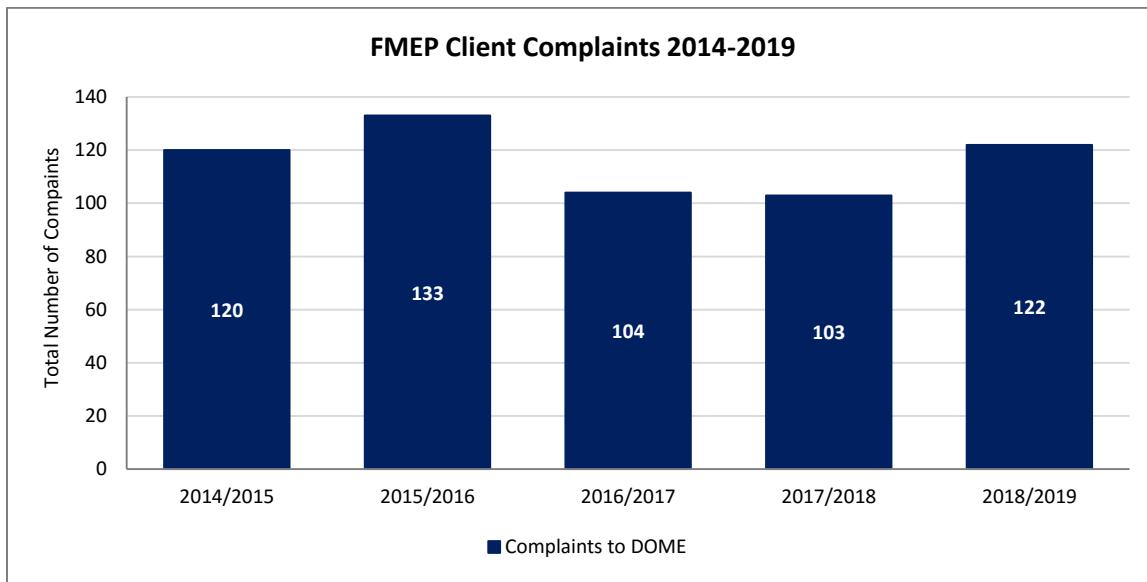
Designated FMEP staff provided three to four days a week services at the main locations between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., and on an as-needed basis in Nanaimo every two weeks. Client referrals were based on walk-in requests and referrals from the judiciary/family justice, as well as direct referrals from within the FMEP.

Outreach staff met with clients over 2,000 times during 2018-2019.

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## CLIENT SERVICE AND COMPLAINTS

The FMEP's focus on client-centric services translates into very low numbers of escalated complaints. Complaints to the Director of Maintenance Enforcement (DOME) have remained very low, averaging 116 per year over the past five years. The chart below details the total numbers for this period.



Considering the size of the caseload (approximately 37,000 cases), the low number of complaints confirms the strong and effective working relationship the FMEP has built with its clients.

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## PROGRAM INITIATIVES

### STAFF AND PROGRAM COSTS

The total number of FMEP staff for 2018-2019 was 196 (establishment FTE) across the three regional offices. This was consistent with the previous fiscal year. The total cost for FMEP enforcement was \$16.8 million dollars, with just over \$214.5 million dollars collected.

The FMEP continues to be one of the most efficient child support organizations in North America.

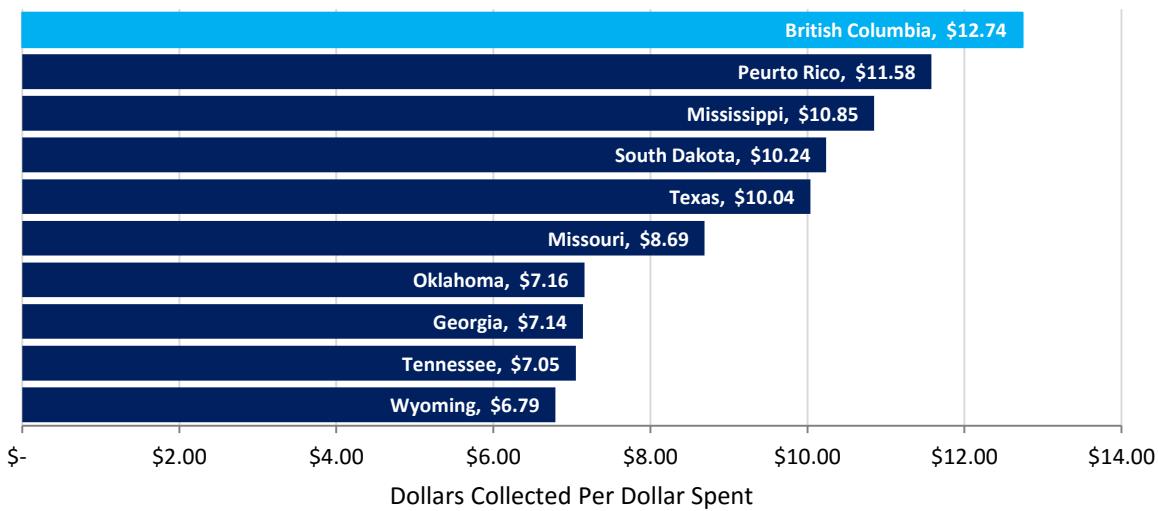
Over the past five years,

- FMEP collections per dollar spent have increased by 8 percent;
- FMEP now collects over \$1 billion dollars every five years, and
- FMEP collected \$200 million or more for the past six years.

Collections per dollar spent for the past five years are noted in the chart and graph below;

Fiscal Year	Collections Per Dollar Spent
2014/2015	\$11.82
2015/2016	\$11.69
2016/2017	\$11.84
2017/2018	\$12.74
2018/2019	\$12.77

**Cost Effectiveness Ratio (Support collected per dollar spent) 2017 - 2018**



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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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