



STATE OF ILLINOIS
HEALTHCARE AND FAMILY
SERVICES

KICKOFF PACKET
CHILD SUPPORT INFORMATION DATA
EXCHANGE PROJECT



DATE: SEPTEMBER 27, 2014



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1. OVERVIEW

The primary objective of the this Kickoff Packet is to provide resources for counties who are interested or plan and implement a collaborative partnership with The Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) to exchange court order information. The packet contains a high level overview of the Child Support Information Data Exchange (CSIDE) project, the goals and objectives of the project. Although each county has a similar structure, there is an acknowledgment by the State leadership that each local project team must take into account different court case management systems, differences in Judicial Officer practices and IV-D Attorney service provider practices. There is also an overall project plan and structure for the CSIDE Project, however, there may need to be small changes to accommodate these different practices around the State without compromising the overall goals of the project. Therefore, the goal of this packet is to educate Circuit Clerks and stakeholders with an understanding of the overall strategy that is hoped to be built upon by such an interface. The target audience is any of the project management teams who are responsible for planning a court order interface project in their local county.

The key to all collaborative projects that involve two large agencies such as the Circuit Court and the Child Support Office is communication and organized project planning. This project is being coordinated as part of the [Illinois Framework](#), through a statement of work contract with CSG Government Solutions (CSG) to provide resources and project management to the Illinois Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) to initiate the Project through September 2015. The goal of this document is to provide guidance and resources for the Pilot (Phase I) of this project and provide outreach, training, and assistance to counties who are ready to begin project planning with their judicial and child support counterparts (Phase 2).





2. BACKGROUND

Data exchange between courts and other agencies is a growing trend and is necessary to increase efficiencies and improve outcomes for the public. There is national support for data exchange with the courts from such organizations as the Conference of State Court Administrators when they wrote:

...the demand to send or receive court information between courts and local, state and Federal agencies is growing at a rapid rate. Electronic data access technology which interfaces across agencies and branches of government, such as integrated justice information systems, fosters greater efficiency in the courts and enhances public confidence in the entire legal system (COSCA, 2005).

In Illinois, there is support at the highest level with the signature by the Governor in 2014 of Executive Order 14-06 which created a governance structure for data exchange in the criminal justice realm. In addition, the Supreme Court created an Automation and Technology Committee to provide consultation, guidance, and recommendations regarding standards, policies and procedures relating to the use of technology and automation within the judicial branch.

The Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) also supports innovative use of technology and data exchange with the Courts to streamline and improve communication with the courts. Through the National Judicial-Child Support Task Force composed of state and tribal child support agencies, representatives of state courts, state court administrators, OCSE and ACF Federal and Region Offices, and national associations of courts created a data standard model for adoption by National Information Exchange Model, which is gone over in more detail later in this document.

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/css/resource/automating-the-exchange-of-court-data>

The premise of this data standard model is that it would be a reusable set of standards that could be adopted by different states and child support agencies. The communication model relies on Extensible Markup Language (XML) and conforms to federal standards, which is very important given that, in some states a state may use more than one court case management system, as is the case in Illinois. OCSE's endorsement was made formal in [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL\) 08-39](#):

Automating the data exchange will result in consistent data which will speed up the execution of child support orders allowing more time to increase the services to families. While this exchange is not mandated, we highly recommend this since it meets the business needs to provide a common structure for automated exchange of information and documents between participating child support enforcement (CSE) agencies and courts. The endorsement of this model by the Conference of Chief Justices within the National Center for State Courts will be final on October 31, 2008.



Other States have done similar projects and have realized these advantages of electronic exchanges with the courts, including Colorado which was recognized nationally for their Data Information SHaring (DISH) project. The evaluators noted in their [final report](#):

DISH was a highly successful project resulting in the creation, development, and statewide implementation of an electronic exchange of information between Child Support Enforcement (CSE) and Judicial agencies in child support cases filed using Administrative Process Action (APA), which is the most common method of order establishment in Colorado. Conducted collaboratively by CSE and the Judicial agencies, the project was widely viewed to have reduced the workload associated with processing APA cases, cut the rate of errors in such cases, and sped up the process of filing child support cases and obtaining orders. The project was also viewed as having improved relationships between the child support agency and the court and led to a more uniform and efficient way of assigning docket and FSR numbers to new child support cases.



3. NATIONAL INFORMATION EXCHANGE MODEL (NIEM)

As explained by the [Information Sharing Environment \(ISE\)](#) group, The National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) connects communities of people who share a common need to exchange information to advance their missions. NIEM provides a commonly understood way for various organizations to connect data that improves government decision making for the greater good. By making it possible for organizations to share critical data, NIEM empowers people to make informed decisions that improve efficiency and advance and fulfill organizational missions. NIEM is not a standard, database, software, or the actual exchange of information. Rather, NIEM provides the community of users, tools, common terminology, governance, methodologies, and support that enables the creation of standards. As a result, organizations can “speak the same language” to quickly and efficiently exchange meaningful data.

A national program, NIEM is supported by and used within all levels of government for a broad set of missions including but not limited to justice, homeland security, international trade, human services, and cyber. Robust communities of practitioners use NIEM to ensure that when information is exchanged between various systems, it is standardized and commonly understood for quicker and more effective use. NIEM is included in the overall data strategies for Colorado, Indiana, and New York City.

Data sharing through NIEM helps government agencies advance their missions and improve the quality of their service to the public, improving lives. By reducing data processing time, NIEM quickly puts actionable information in the hands of decision makers and decreases response time. The information exchanges developed using NIEM result in reusable artifacts that reduce future development costs, resulting in cost avoidance. NIEM is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

According to [NIEM.org](#), to begin exchanging information, information exchange partners must first develop a data exchange. In NIEM, a “data exchange” is also known as an Information Exchange Package ([IEP](#)), a description of specific information exchanged between a sender and a receiver. The IEP is usually coupled with additional documentation, sample ([XML](#)) instances, business rules, and more to compose an Information Exchange Package Documentation ([IEPD](#)). An IEPD is the final product of the NIEM exchange development process, also known as the IEPD Lifecycle.

NIEM uses Extensible Markup Language (XML) for schema definitions and element representation, which allows the structure and meaning of data to be defined through simple, but carefully defined XML syntax rules. This provides a common framework for information exchange.

NIEM.org has many free resources, tools and online training modules for counties that are unfamiliar with NIEM and the advantages for using NIEM.

3.1 NIEM Planning Resources

Counties who are new to NIEM and data exchange may benefit from being trained on NIEM. There are several online training courses offered through [NIEM.gov](#) that may be very beneficial to their project planning team. In addition, NIEM offers interested agencies several tools for examining data exchange and they refer to their resources as the NIEM Engagement Process: They have a [NIEM Engagement Process – User Guide](#) which was published and is available to provide an end-to-end process description.



In addition to the User Guide, the engagement process consists of the following of phases:

- **Research:** Establish a baseline understanding of the organization’s mission priorities and current information-sharing activities. Tools Available: [NIEM Interview Framework](#), [NIEM Core Capabilities](#), [NIEM Data Collection Tool](#)
- **Stakeholder Interviews:** Perform interviews with organizational points of contact to gather input for the NIEM Readiness Assessment and Cost Model. Questions are based on the NIEM Core Capabilities.
Tools Available: [NIEM Interview Framework](#), [NIEM Core Capabilities](#), [NIEM Data Collection Tool](#)
- **NIEM Readiness Assessment:** Assess the readiness of the organization to adopt NIEM based on interview findings and initial research. Tools Available: [NIEM Readiness Assessment](#)
- **NIEM Value Quantification and Qualification:** Determine the organization’s potential costs of NIEM adoption. Define performance metrics for the information exchange. Tools Available: [NIEM Cost Model User Guide](#) and [NIEM Cost Model](#)
- **NIEM Adoption Plan:** Establish an adoption approach that will result in the development of a tactical action plan for NIEM implementation. Tools Available: [NIEM Road to Adoption](#)

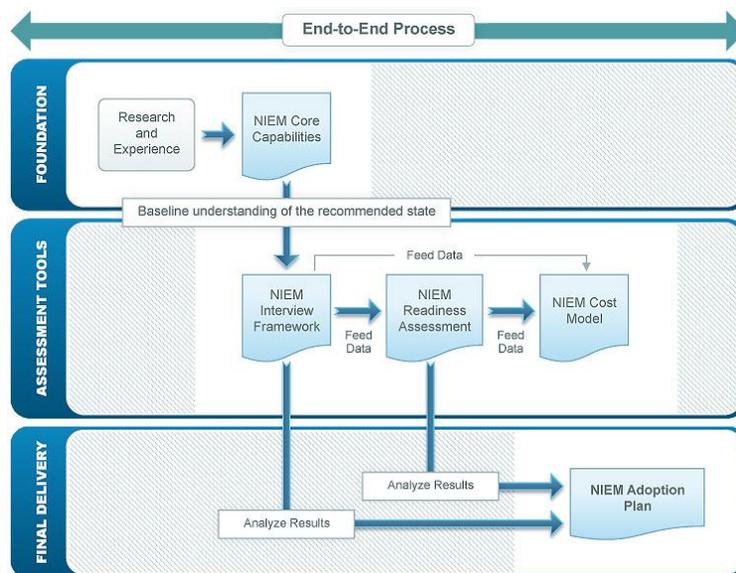


Figure 1: NIEM Roadmap to Adoption – showing the major steps in an action plan to implement NIEM.



4. CSIDE PROJECT

As part of the overall KIDS modernization project, the CSIDE Project goal is to implement an electronic interface between the child support office and court to exchange court order information using National Information Exchange Model (NIEM). The primary objectives and benefits are:

- Increased Collections – Quicker delivery of child support orders as well as quicker child support order establishments and enforcement actions lead to timelier initiation of collections and more timely disbursements.
- Improved Access to Current Case Information – Alleviates the need for staff (caseworkers, court staff, process servers, attorneys, etc.) to call, fax, or e-mail requests for current case information. This will also increase interoperability between state and county governments.
- Faster Case Intake/Potential for Automated Case Initiation – Reduces data entry time per case and staff time dedicated to data entry and reduces time required to obtain data from process partners.
- Paper Reduction – Achieves dollar savings in paper, postage, storage, courier, etc. as well as minimizes the staff burden of archiving records and destroying archived records according to State regulations for both child support and judicial entities. This also improves the security of personal information contained in both systems.
- Error Reduction – The project will eliminate double entry of court order information. Single entry for electronic exchange reduces the opportunity for keystroke error and thus decreases the time spent by child support and judicial/legal agency staff correcting data entry errors.

The measures of success are:

- ✓ Timely- reduce timeframe to enter court order data; reduce payment cycle time
- ✓ Accurate- improve accuracy of order data in KIDS; improve accuracy of payment and address data
- ✓ Secure- security measures and processes have been implemented to control access to personal information
- ✓ Cost Effectiveness- reduce the cost of labor and materials at both county and regional offices
- ✓ Mutually Beneficial to agencies- both State and County partners experience better results and greater service to customers as a result of implementing this project

The strategy for the CSIDE Project is to collaborate with DCSS, Circuit Court Clerks and their IT staff, judicial officers, attorney service providers, and other interested agencies and develop a NIEM conformant approach to exchanging court order information electronically. The project is being piloted in Lake County as Phase 1 and the lessons learned and experiences will be incorporated into planning for the next target counties (Phase 2).

The project is being conducted in three modules described in the following section, 4.1, Process Flow.

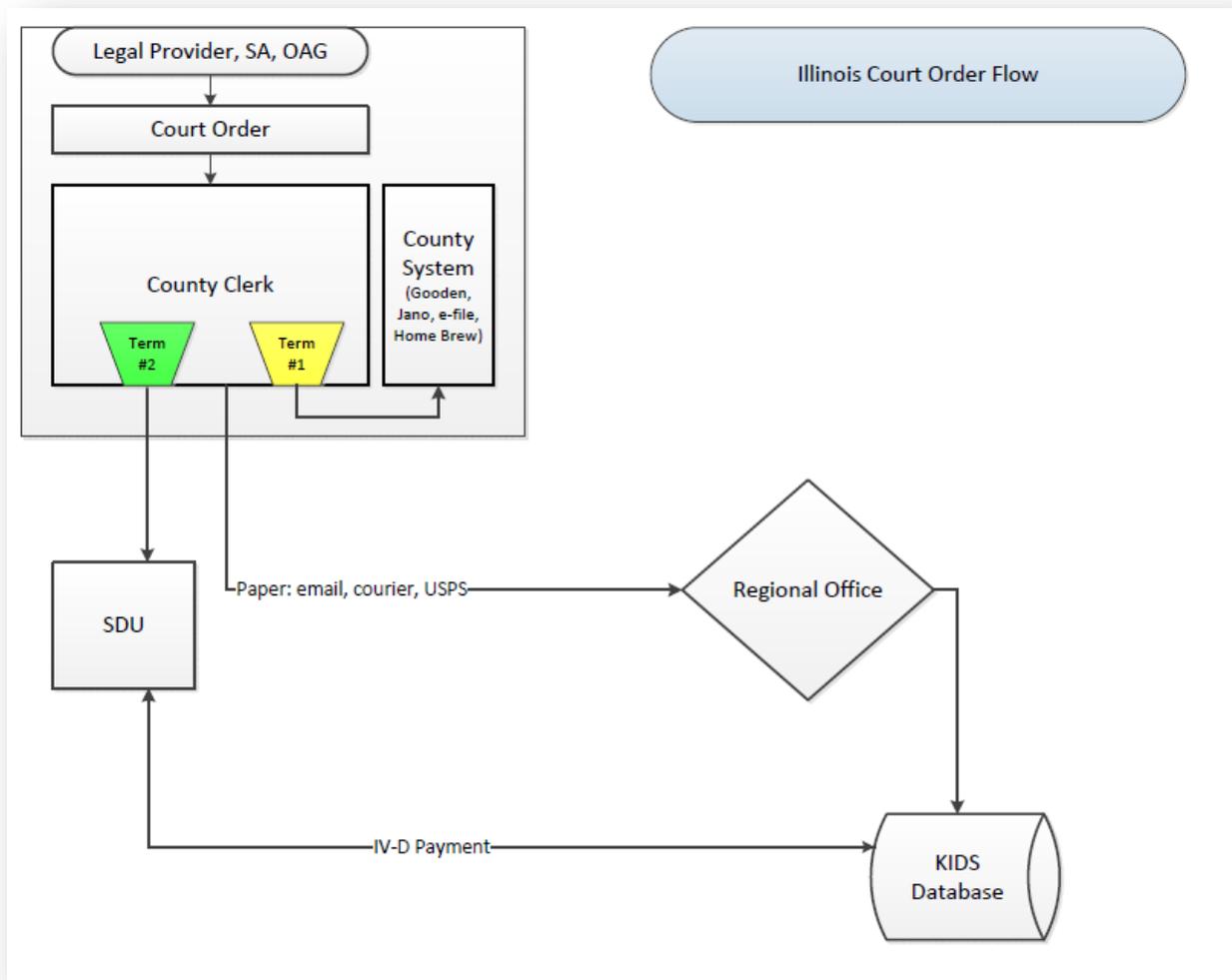


4.1 Process Flow

The illustrations in this section describe the current process, the process after implementation of module 1 of the project, and the process anticipated at the implementation of module 2. This is being done in conjunction with the overall child support modernization project, and the enhancements taking place in the statewide child support system will serve to further enhance the functionality of this interface.

4.1.1 Current Process

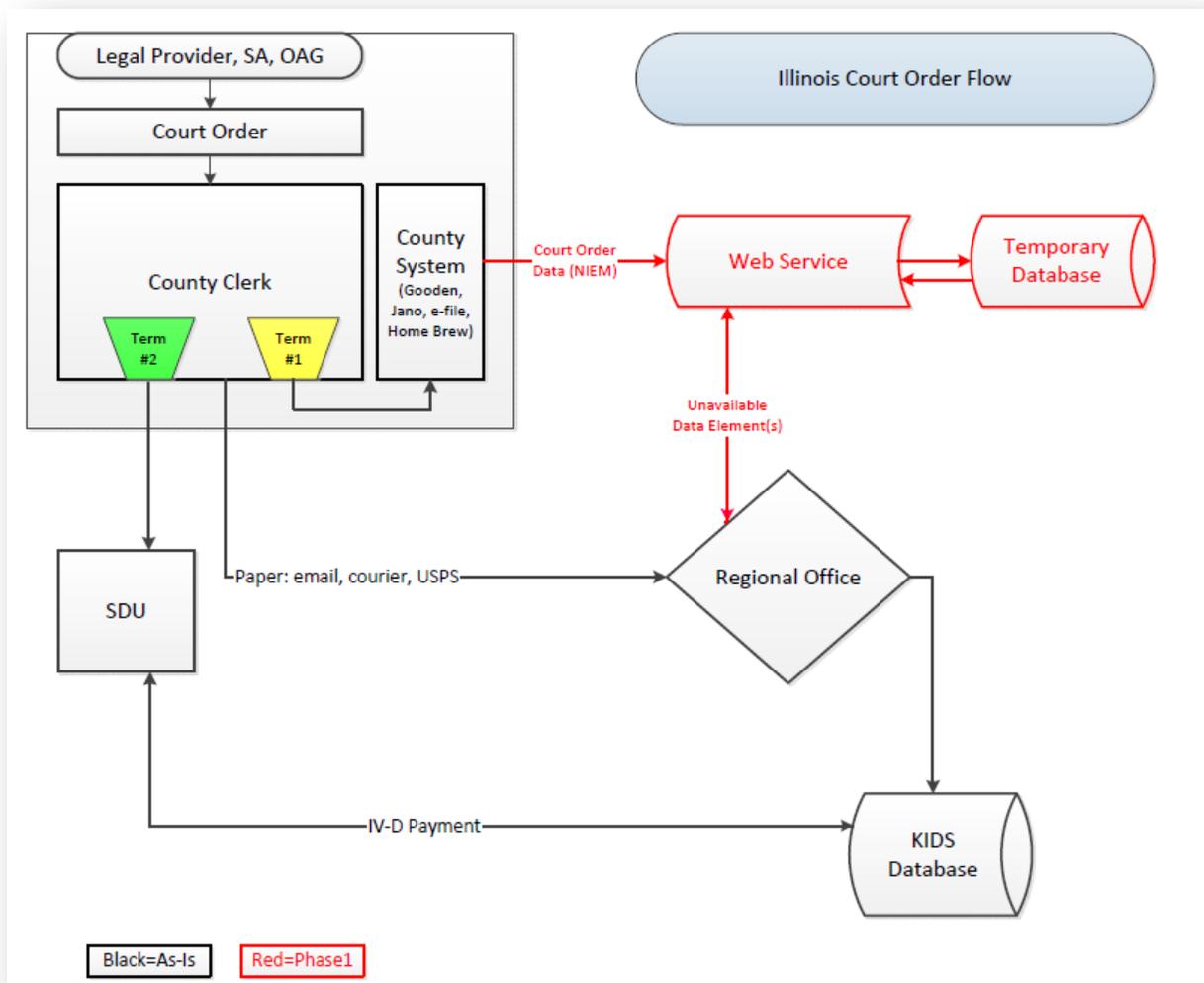
The following illustrate the current process flow. Under the current system, court order data is entered into the county system for county record keeping purposes, and provided either on paper or as a scanned image to the Regional Child Support office for entry into the KIDS system. There is a separate process where the information is also entered into the SDU data system done as a separate action by the staff at the Clerk of Court in each county.





4.1.2 NIEM Interface Module 1

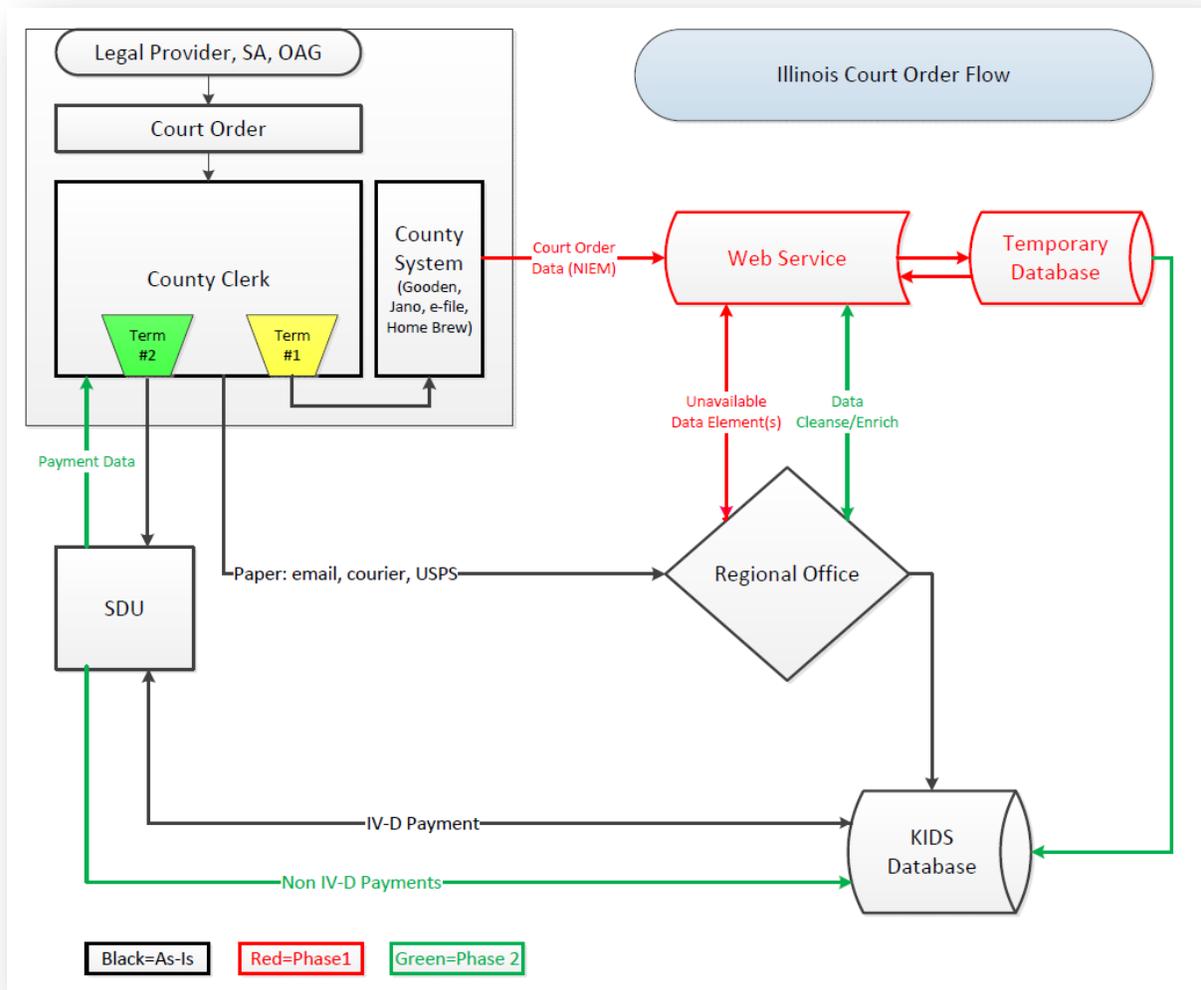
When the Module 1 court order interface is implemented, there will be an electronic transmission of court order data direct from the Clerk of Court system to a State operated Web Service which will collect the court order data, use a separate database to hold the information temporarily while it is verified as complete. Then the data is transmitted to the Regional Office where any unavailable data elements are added, and the record is sent to the KIDS database for processing. The use of paper, email, courier or USPS to provide orders to the regional office will be discontinued under module 1.





4.1.3 NIEM Interface Module 2

Module 2 of the interface will follow the same path as module 1, with the enhancement of a step whereby court order data is reviewed automatically and those cases meeting an agreed upon threshold are automatically recorded into the KIDS database. For those cases that do not meet this accuracy threshold, missing elements are added and any errors are corrected. This process, called “Data Cleanse and Enrich” is done only on cases that do not meet the threshold for automated processing direct from the temporary database into KIDS. Module 2 also includes functionality to provide payment data on Non-IV-D Cases electronically to the County Clerk. This will be done after the consolidation of all payment data so that there is one date source for both IV-D and Non-IV-D payments.





5. ILLINOIS HFS PROJECT TEAM

As implementation of the NIEM interface progresses, the following people are available as resources to the county offices to help address business and technical concerns and assist with outreach, planning and project management.

Contact Name	Phone	Email	Project Role
Christine Towles	(630) 221-2329	Christine.Towles@Illinois.gov	Project Coordinator
Tracy Brown-Hagmann	(217) 524-7692	Tracy.Brown-Hagmann@Illinois.gov	Technical Lead
Mark Woloshyn	(217) 524-2111	Mark.Woloshyn@Illinois.gov	Technical Analyst
Denise Gilbey	(815) 987-7659	Denise.Gilbey@Illinois.gov	Business Process Analyst



6. SAMPLE BUSINESS CASE

For those counties who are in the initial planning stages there are several resources that may be helpful. Through the National Judicial-Child Support Task Force, OCSE published [DCL 08-01](#) which created two business case templates, one for use by child support agencies, and also one for judicial agencies. This resource may be helpful for those counties who must present the case for electronic data exchange to outside stakeholders or funding sources.