



ALASKA
CHILD SUPPORT

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A New Chapter for System Modernization: Alaska's Bold Leap in Child Support

The Alaska Modernization Project
Alaska Child Support Enforcement Division

Project dates: February 2024 to February 2026

AWARD CATEGORY:
Operational Efficiency

Executive Summary: First in the Nation



On October 6, 2025, Alaska Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED) **launched the nation's first modern, commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) system** designed specifically for the complexities of child support. CSED departed from traditional modernization approaches and launched the Alaska Child Support Enforcement Services System (ACSESS) in just 20 months, **a full month ahead of schedule.**

The Alaska Modernization Project (AMP) replaced a decades-old, disjointed mainframe with a single solution that automates workflows, expands digital access, and improves service delivery. As a federally regulated program, CSED was required to complete a rigorous federal certification process covering more than 1,600 requirements. ACSESS achieved federal certification in just 29 days—the fastest in child support history and the first fully integrated COTS system to do so—validating both the system and Alaska's modernization approach.

By solving real business challenges, protecting service continuity, and delivering measurable outcomes from day one, CSED has redefined what successful child support modernization looks like. This transformation will have meaningful impact for families nationwide—expanding access, improving timeliness of payments, and making it easier to navigate services in a system that supports approximately 1 in 5 children nationwide. **Alaska's success proves that modernization does not have to be long, risky, or disruptive—and establishes a clear, replicable blueprint for other states.**



**"This will be a
game changer for
modernization
nationwide."**

**— Chris Tran,
Director, Alaska CSED**





A New Model for Child Support

The Alaska Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED) launched a new software system, improving operations and service for families. For the project, CSED decided to depart from the traditional modernization playbook and become the first child support agency to implement a single commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) system—in under two years.

Child support agencies manage complex financial and interpersonal arrangements while complying with strict federal requirements. A single case can involve multiple parents and employers across state lines—along with changing incomes, custody arrangements, and more. Payment reliability has measurable impacts on family economic stability and children’s well-being.

Until October 2025, CSED was operating on a legacy mainframe system, which created growing operational challenges with real-life impact for families. Every minute caseworkers are dealing with system issues is time not devoted to more important tasks, and limited online access and communication channels can cause stress and uncertainty for vulnerable families. CSED recognized that change was necessary—not only to support staff efficiency, but to better serve the families who depend on the program.

At the same time, CSED was not inspired by the broader modernization landscape. Child support projects were taking 5–10 years or more, exceeding budgets, disrupting operations, and often failing to launch altogether. The primary culprit? Limited technology options: agencies were transferring stale systems from other states, moving their legacy systems to the cloud without functional improvement, or pursuing “best-of-breed” integrations that dragged on without producing a cohesive system or meaningful cumulative impact. During these prolonged efforts, families remain stuck with outdated experiences. Leaders opted for a new approach that would deliver meaningful improvements while strengthening service delivery for the people who rely on child support every day.

Legacy Environment

CSED’s Solution

Mainframe was costly to maintain and difficult to change

Launch a future-proof, cost-effective COTS solution

Manual, fragmented workflows slowed casework and increased staff workload

Automation streamlines workflow and processes

Customers could only interact during business hours using traditional methods like phone or mail

Expand digital services via 24/7 self-service portals

~\$94M processed annually

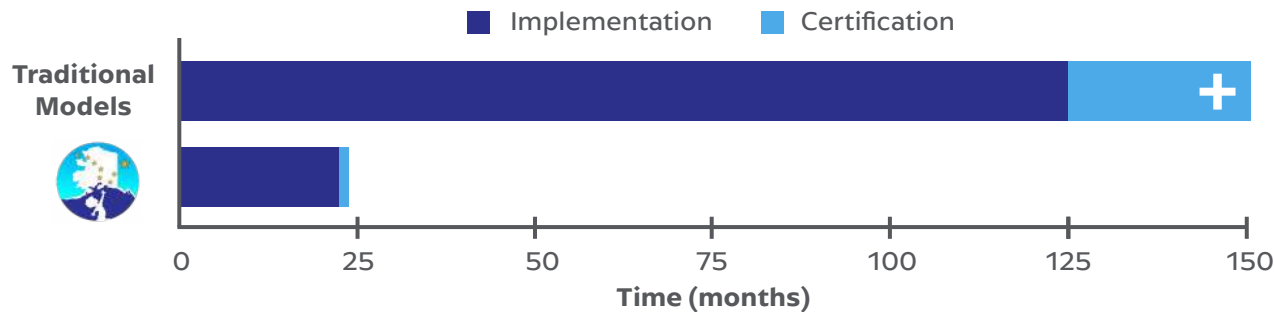
34k+ families served

130k+ participating employers

Implementation



AMP Timeline



States must complete the rigorous federal certification process in order to receive funding. Some states spend years, even decades, attempting certification; many abandon their projects before even reaching this point.

Contract & Partnership DEC. 2023

CSED did not want its staff or customers to wait a decade to see improvements. To mitigate risk and avoid common pitfalls, AMP took a different approach:

- ♦ Partnered with Fast Enterprises (FAST), a software consultant with over 25 years of success delivering large scale government modernization
- ♦ Selected a solution built on a proven platform
- ♦ Conducted peer due diligence with New Zealand, which launched FAST's child support solution in 2021

Project FEB. 2024

The purpose built COTS system provided more than 80% of core functionality on day one, enabling immediate configuration.

- ♦ Highly engaged business staff were assigned to work side by side with FAST
- ♦ Staff developed a strong sense of ownership from engaging with the system and seeing their feedback reflected in real time
- ♦ Consistent leadership participation reinforced commitment to the project

Launch OCT. 2023

CSED chose to launch ACSESS one month early to align with the federal fiscal calendar.

- ♦ Legacy system retired on day one—no dual systems or rollbacks
- ♦ All payments processed correctly on day one
- ♦ All four customer portals launched simultaneously
- ♦ No customer confusion or service disruption

Federal Certification

JAN. 2026 – FEB. 2026

ACSESS earned certification in just 29 days—a fraction of the years-long process seen in other states. This achievement secured CSED's federal funding and allowed staff to refocus their attention to customer service. The process involved:

- ♦ 1,200+ pages of documentation submitted by CSED
- ♦ Staff demonstrations, in which federal reviewers observed notably high staff proficiency in system
- ♦ Same-day implementation of minor changes requested by federal reviewers

Impact



Legacy Environment

Fragmented mainframe and manual processes

Inflexible and costly to modify

Limited online access for parents and employers; no online services for tribes

No accessibility features

Manual re-entry of applications and forms

Staff spent up to 40 days preparing reports for federal government, some of which could only be generated once a year

Limited participation in a federal data-sharing program—one communication per case per day

Modern ACSESS Experience

Fully integrated, cloud-based platform with a single system of record

Future-ready, easy to make changes

[24/7 self-service portals](#) for parents, employers, tribes, and third-party verification

ADA + WCAG compliant (keyboard navigation, screen readers, multilingual support)

Automated workflows and pre-populated forms

Instant federal reporting and drill-down analytics—capabilities few states have

Full participation in federal program, unlimited data transfer with other jurisdictions

A Seamless Customer Experience

Parents can now see full case details, manage autopay, update information, submit appeals, and message CSED directly via the online portal—capabilities that were unavailable in the legacy system. The system auto-routes customer inquiries into workflow and task-management queues. For tribes, secure data exchange replaces manual email workflow and electronic deposits replace paper checks for the first time. Built-in capabilities further streamline support by allowing staff to view live or recorded client actions, making troubleshooting fast and effective across any portal.

“This is the most I’ve ever been able to do on my case.”

— Parent user of CSED portal



Impact



In the first week alone, thousands of users—including parents, employers, the Attorney General's Office, and other state agencies—created online accounts. Shortly after launch, ACSESS passed two stress tests: It successfully distributed the largest single payment to a caregiver in Alaska history and intercepted Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) payments with no issues—an annual event that concentrates nearly 10% of child support collections into a single processing window.

Zero Change Orders

Change orders are a leading cause of budget overruns and delays in government IT projects. Through effective planning, communication, and stewardship of resources, CSED delivered a complete enterprise-level system **on time with zero change orders**—an outcome rarely achieved at this scale.

“In my 36 years in child support, and 19 federal certifications, this is the first contract I’ve seen with no change orders. That’s a big deal.”

— **John Cheng**, former federal reviewer



“Workflow management is no longer my primary function—it’s been taken off my plate.”

— **Rob Short**, Child Support Specialist



“Customer feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.”

— **Nick Phillips**, Client Services Manager

\$65M

distributed in the first 8 months

over 70%

of online activity on mobile

~500

hours in time savings/month

50% ↑

**increase in automated
interstate communication**

40% ↓

decrease in paper mail

These operational improvements translate directly into better service for families—freeing up caseworker time to provide more timely, personalized support and help families navigate their cases.

The Future Is Bright



With flexible COTS architecture, ACSESS is an evergreen platform designed to evolve alongside policy, technology, and customer expectations. CSED will stay continually modern, capable of quickly transforming new ideas into real solutions. Planned enhancements currently include:

- | **Expanded automation to streamline operations**
- | **Advanced analytics to support data-driven decisions**
- | **Continued expansion of the Tribal portal**
- | **An AI-powered chatbot to enhance the customer experience**

A Blueprint for Child Support Modernization

Alaska's success gives child support agencies a [viable new option](#). Modernization doesn't have to be a long struggle; it can be done smoothly and successfully. By taking a calculated risk on a new approach, CSED delivered immediate, measurable value while maintaining service continuity—setting a new standard for child support modernization and establishing a replicable blueprint for states seeking to better serve families.



“We have a successful blueprint and would love to share it.”

**— Chris Tran,
Director, Alaska CSED**