

Coordinated Family Services



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Established in 2001, Coordinated Family Services encompasses a range of programs created to facilitate the timely and effective resolution of family-related court cases. To fund these initiatives, the Idaho Legislature established the Drug Court, Mental Health Court, and Family Court Services Fund. These resources support parents who are divorcing or establishing parenting arrangements. They also support Idaho's domestic violence courts. Family Court Services (FCS) plays a key role in coordinating supervised visitations, co-parent education, mediation, and parenting time evaluations.

REDUCING FAMILY CONFLICT

In fiscal year 2024, Idaho families filed over 7,460 cases involving divorce, child support, or custody issues. During this period, judges referred more than 1,780 cases to mediation to seek resolution outside of formal court proceedings.

Idaho's programs emphasize educating parents on the harmful effects of conflict on children. Last year, over 5,100 new or ongoing cases were ordered to participate in parent education. FCS also launched an online version of the "Focus on Children" class - a critical component of parent education. This offers greater accessibility for parents with scheduling challenges, particularly in rural areas. The online class is divided into learning modules with short, digestible segments.

When mediation fails to resolve conflicts, judges may order a parenting time evaluation.

These evaluations serve as a tool for judges to navigate disputes and are typically a last resort, as they place the final decision-making in the hands of the court. In FY2024, more than 165 parenting time evaluations were ordered.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURTS

Idaho's domestic violence (DV) courts are structured to enhance safety by connecting victims with advocacy and support services while holding offenders accountable through judicial oversight. Currently, the state has 10 DV courts spread across five judicial districts. These courts rely on judicial review hearings supported by comprehensive reports from probation officers, treatment providers, and, when appropriate, victims. This approach ensures adherence to court directives and monitors the offender's progress. In FY2024, over 3,500 review hearings were conducted.

COURT EDUCATION

The Idaho Judicial Branch prioritizes ongoing education for DV court personnel. Over 140 judges, attorneys, court staff and service providers attended the 2024 Domestic Violence Court Conference, where they received training on language accessibility for trauma victims, victimless prosecution and defense, and recognizing and responding to stalking within court cases. Separately, more than 45 judges attended specialized training focused on improving their handling of DV cases — including facilitation techniques, victim and perpetrator behavior, fact-finding, fairness, and enhancing access to justice.

