

Child Support Program - December quarter 2021

About Child Support		Number of active child support cases, parents and children, December quarter 2017 to December quarter 2021							Percentage of child support cases by collection method, December quarter 2017 to December quarter 2021					Number of payers and payees, December quarter 2021																																																																																																																																																												
Quick Facts		Dec-17	Dec-18	Dec-19	Dec-20	Dec-21	Change Dec-17 to Dec-21	Change Dec-20 to Dec-21	Stacked bar chart showing percentage of child support cases by collection method (Agency Collect vs Private Collect) from Dec-17 to Dec-21.					Pie chart showing number of payers and payees in Dec-21: Payers only (596,348, 49%), Payees only (18,728, 2%), Both payers and payees (599,408, 49%).																																																																																																																																																												
<p>Child Support is a private transfer of money between separated parents for the support of their children.</p> <p>The objective of the Child Support Scheme is to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> parents share in the costs of supporting their children according to their financial capacities adequate financial support is available to all children not living with both parents Commonwealth involvement and expenditure is limited to the minimum amount necessary for ensuring children's needs are met work incentives for both parents to participate in the labour force are not impaired, and the overall arrangements are non-intrusive to personal privacy and are simple, flexible and efficient. <p>Cases that involve parents/carers who transfer child support through Services Australia are referred to as Agency Collect Cases. Cases that transfer child support by private arrangement are referred to as Private Collect Cases.</p>		<table border="1"> <tr><th>Active Cases</th><td>Agency Collect</td><td>340,251</td><td>329,291</td><td>339,826</td><td>337,296</td><td>333,359</td><td>-2.0%</td><td>-1.2%</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Private Collect</td><td>353,227</td><td>345,157</td><td>339,630</td><td>337,096</td><td>332,350</td><td>-5.9%</td><td>-1.4%</td></tr> <tr><td>Total</td><td></td><td>693,478</td><td>674,448</td><td>679,456</td><td>674,392</td><td>665,709</td><td>-4.0%</td><td>-1.3%</td></tr> </table>	Active Cases	Agency Collect	340,251	329,291	339,826	337,296	333,359	-2.0%	-1.2%		Private Collect	353,227	345,157	339,630	337,096	332,350	-5.9%	-1.4%	Total		693,478	674,448	679,456	674,392	665,709	-4.0%	-1.3%	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Parents/carers</th><td>Agency Collect</td><td>637,475</td><td>635,959</td><td>637,187</td><td>632,993</td><td>626,011</td><td>-1.8%</td><td>-1.1%</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Private Collect</td><td>608,413</td><td>672,425</td><td>653,395</td><td>656,150</td><td>646,712</td><td>-6.1%</td><td>-1.4%</td></tr> <tr><td>Total**</td><td></td><td>1,245,888</td><td>1,308,384</td><td>1,290,582</td><td>1,289,143</td><td>1,272,723</td><td>-4.9%</td><td>-1.3%</td></tr> </table>	Parents/carers	Agency Collect	637,475	635,959	637,187	632,993	626,011	-1.8%	-1.1%		Private Collect	608,413	672,425	653,395	656,150	646,712	-6.1%	-1.4%	Total**		1,245,888	1,308,384	1,290,582	1,289,143	1,272,723	-4.9%	-1.3%	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Children*</th><td>Agency Collect</td><td>500,181</td><td>500,733</td><td>500,823</td><td>499,837</td><td>492,941</td><td>-1.4%</td><td>-1.4%</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Private Collect</td><td>567,912</td><td>554,398</td><td>545,638</td><td>542,072</td><td>534,109</td><td>-6.0%</td><td>-1.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Total</td><td></td><td>1,068,093</td><td>1,055,131</td><td>1,046,461</td><td>1,041,909</td><td>1,027,050</td><td>-3.9%</td><td>-1.4%</td></tr> </table>	Children*	Agency Collect	500,181	500,733	500,823	499,837	492,941	-1.4%	-1.4%		Private Collect	567,912	554,398	545,638	542,072	534,109	-6.0%	-1.5%	Total		1,068,093	1,055,131	1,046,461	1,041,909	1,027,050	-3.9%	-1.4%	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Payees</th><td>Agency Collect</td><td>500,181</td><td>500,733</td><td>500,823</td><td>499,837</td><td>492,941</td><td>-1.4%</td><td>-1.4%</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Private Collect</td><td>567,912</td><td>554,398</td><td>545,638</td><td>542,072</td><td>534,109</td><td>-6.0%</td><td>-1.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Total**</td><td></td><td>1,068,093</td><td>1,055,131</td><td>1,046,461</td><td>1,041,909</td><td>1,027,050</td><td>-3.9%</td><td>-1.4%</td></tr> </table>	Payees	Agency Collect	500,181	500,733	500,823	499,837	492,941	-1.4%	-1.4%		Private Collect	567,912	554,398	545,638	542,072	534,109	-6.0%	-1.5%	Total**		1,068,093	1,055,131	1,046,461	1,041,909	1,027,050	-3.9%	-1.4%	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Male</th><td>Agency Collect</td><td>554,100</td><td>544,264</td><td>538,361</td><td>530,791</td><td>520,039</td><td>-6.1%</td><td>-2.0%</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Private Collect</td><td>589,599</td><td>599,666</td><td>602,588</td><td>603,946</td><td>600,960</td><td>-1.8%</td><td>-0.4%</td></tr> <tr><td>Total**</td><td></td><td>1,143,699</td><td>1,143,930</td><td>1,140,949</td><td>1,134,737</td><td>1,121,000</td><td>-3.3%</td><td>-1.2%</td></tr> </table>	Male	Agency Collect	554,100	544,264	538,361	530,791	520,039	-6.1%	-2.0%		Private Collect	589,599	599,666	602,588	603,946	600,960	-1.8%	-0.4%	Total**		1,143,699	1,143,930	1,140,949	1,134,737	1,121,000	-3.3%	-1.2%	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Female</th><td>Agency Collect</td><td>70,955</td><td>70,967</td><td>71,124</td><td>72,609</td><td>73,196</td><td>3.2%</td><td>0.8%</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Private Collect</td><td>643,385</td><td>634,986</td><td>630,458</td><td>626,164</td><td>618,136</td><td>-3.9%</td><td>-1.3%</td></tr> <tr><td>Total**</td><td></td><td>714,340</td><td>705,953</td><td>701,582</td><td>698,773</td><td>691,332</td><td>-3.0%</td><td>-1.1%</td></tr> </table>	Female	Agency Collect	70,955	70,967	71,124	72,609	73,196	3.2%	0.8%		Private Collect	643,385	634,986	630,458	626,164	618,136	-3.9%	-1.3%	Total**		714,340	705,953	701,582	698,773	691,332	-3.0%	-1.1%	<p>* A parent can be in both collection methods for different children. Therefore, the components won't add to total. ** Total includes payers and payees with no gender recorded.</p>
Active Cases	Agency Collect	340,251	329,291	339,826	337,296	333,359	-2.0%	-1.2%																																																																																																																																																																		
	Private Collect	353,227	345,157	339,630	337,096	332,350	-5.9%	-1.4%																																																																																																																																																																		
Total		693,478	674,448	679,456	674,392	665,709	-4.0%	-1.3%																																																																																																																																																																		
Parents/carers	Agency Collect	637,475	635,959	637,187	632,993	626,011	-1.8%	-1.1%																																																																																																																																																																		
	Private Collect	608,413	672,425	653,395	656,150	646,712	-6.1%	-1.4%																																																																																																																																																																		
Total**		1,245,888	1,308,384	1,290,582	1,289,143	1,272,723	-4.9%	-1.3%																																																																																																																																																																		
Children*	Agency Collect	500,181	500,733	500,823	499,837	492,941	-1.4%	-1.4%																																																																																																																																																																		
	Private Collect	567,912	554,398	545,638	542,072	534,109	-6.0%	-1.5%																																																																																																																																																																		
Total		1,068,093	1,055,131	1,046,461	1,041,909	1,027,050	-3.9%	-1.4%																																																																																																																																																																		
Payees	Agency Collect	500,181	500,733	500,823	499,837	492,941	-1.4%	-1.4%																																																																																																																																																																		
	Private Collect	567,912	554,398	545,638	542,072	534,109	-6.0%	-1.5%																																																																																																																																																																		
Total**		1,068,093	1,055,131	1,046,461	1,041,909	1,027,050	-3.9%	-1.4%																																																																																																																																																																		
Male	Agency Collect	554,100	544,264	538,361	530,791	520,039	-6.1%	-2.0%																																																																																																																																																																		
	Private Collect	589,599	599,666	602,588	603,946	600,960	-1.8%	-0.4%																																																																																																																																																																		
Total**		1,143,699	1,143,930	1,140,949	1,134,737	1,121,000	-3.3%	-1.2%																																																																																																																																																																		
Female	Agency Collect	70,955	70,967	71,124	72,609	73,196	3.2%	0.8%																																																																																																																																																																		
	Private Collect	643,385	634,986	630,458	626,164	618,136	-3.9%	-1.3%																																																																																																																																																																		
Total**		714,340	705,953	701,582	698,773	691,332	-3.0%	-1.1%																																																																																																																																																																		
<p>Payment by collection method and care arrangements, December quarter 2021*</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Amount of Care</th> <th colspan="2">Agency Collect</th> <th colspan="2">Private Collect</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Payers</th> <th>Payees</th> <th>Payers</th> <th>Payees</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Below regular care (0 to 51 nights per year or < 14%)</td> <td>225,175</td> <td>1,542</td> <td>181,272</td> <td>3,107</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regular care (52 to 127 nights per year or 14% to < 35%)</td> <td>63,023</td> <td>395</td> <td>87,534</td> <td>1,051</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shared care (128 to 237 nights per year or 35% to 65%)</td> <td>28,697</td> <td>28,891</td> <td>54,945</td> <td>55,043</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Primary care (238 to 313 nights per year or > 65% to 86%)</td> <td>394</td> <td>63,130</td> <td>1,053</td> <td>87,558</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Above primary care (314 to 365 nights per year or > 86%)</td> <td>1,509</td> <td>224,992</td> <td>3,084</td> <td>182,081</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Amount of Care	Agency Collect		Private Collect		Payers	Payees	Payers	Payees	Below regular care (0 to 51 nights per year or < 14%)	225,175	1,542	181,272	3,107	Regular care (52 to 127 nights per year or 14% to < 35%)	63,023	395	87,534	1,051	Shared care (128 to 237 nights per year or 35% to 65%)	28,697	28,891	54,945	55,043	Primary care (238 to 313 nights per year or > 65% to 86%)	394	63,130	1,053	87,558	Above primary care (314 to 365 nights per year or > 86%)	1,509	224,992	3,084	182,081	<p>Median adjusted taxable income by payers and payees, December quarter 2021</p>	<p>Payer and payee median adjusted taxable income, December quarter 2017 to December quarter 2021</p>																																																																																																																																					
Amount of Care	Agency Collect		Private Collect																																																																																																																																																																							
	Payers	Payees	Payers	Payees																																																																																																																																																																						
Below regular care (0 to 51 nights per year or < 14%)	225,175	1,542	181,272	3,107																																																																																																																																																																						
Regular care (52 to 127 nights per year or 14% to < 35%)	63,023	395	87,534	1,051																																																																																																																																																																						
Shared care (128 to 237 nights per year or 35% to 65%)	28,697	28,891	54,945	55,043																																																																																																																																																																						
Primary care (238 to 313 nights per year or > 65% to 86%)	394	63,130	1,053	87,558																																																																																																																																																																						
Above primary care (314 to 365 nights per year or > 86%)	1,509	224,992	3,084	182,081																																																																																																																																																																						
<p>The majority (around two-thirds) of payees have care of their child support child for more than 313 nights a year, whereas the majority (around two-thirds) of payers have care for less than 52 nights a year. Over 12% of child support parents have shared care arrangements. The number of parents with a shared care arrangement who use Private Collect is around double that of parents who use Agency Collect.</p>		<p>Median annual assessment, December quarter 2017 to December quarter 2021</p>	<p>Number of payers in child support active cases by income type, December quarter 2017 to December quarter 2021</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Income type</th> <th>Dec-17</th> <th>Dec-18</th> <th>Dec-19</th> <th>Dec-20</th> <th>Dec-21</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Actual, declared or derived (e.g. ATO, ISO, overseas)</td> <td>481,210</td> <td>472,086</td> <td>471,805</td> <td>459,394</td> <td>474,704</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Default or deemed (e.g. 2/3 arrears, indexed nil)</td> <td>132,540</td> <td>134,023</td> <td>127,717</td> <td>126,476</td> <td>109,869</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Estimated income</td> <td>32,902</td> <td>31,893</td> <td>34,001</td> <td>42,815</td> <td>35,483</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Post-separation income or no income details</td> <td>1,045</td> <td>937</td> <td>781</td> <td>717</td> <td>749</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total***</td> <td>647,707</td> <td>639,943</td> <td>634,304</td> <td>629,302</td> <td>620,710</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Income type	Dec-17	Dec-18	Dec-19	Dec-20	Dec-21	Actual, declared or derived (e.g. ATO, ISO, overseas)	481,210	472,086	471,805	459,394	474,704	Default or deemed (e.g. 2/3 arrears, indexed nil)	132,540	134,023	127,717	126,476	109,869	Estimated income	32,902	31,893	34,001	42,815	35,483	Post-separation income or no income details	1,045	937	781	717	749	Total***	647,707	639,943	634,304	629,302	620,710	<p>Minimum annual rate, December quarter 2017 to December quarter 2021</p>	<p>Number of child support cases by annual rate payable, December quarter 2017 to December quarter 2021</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Annual rate range</th> <th>Dec-17</th> <th>Dec-18</th> <th>Dec-19</th> <th>Dec-20</th> <th>Dec-21</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>\$0 - \$500</td> <td>215,836</td> <td>202,536</td> <td>195,244</td> <td>198,884</td> <td>198,932</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$501 - \$2,000</td> <td>73,711</td> <td>73,711</td> <td>71,523</td> <td>73,598</td> <td>70,368</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$2,001 - \$5,000</td> <td>147,085</td> <td>144,619</td> <td>140,173</td> <td>134,356</td> <td>138,773</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$5,001 - \$10,000</td> <td>147,202</td> <td>150,351</td> <td>152,601</td> <td>147,038</td> <td>143,059</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$10,001 - \$20,000</td> <td>86,112</td> <td>90,235</td> <td>94,977</td> <td>94,682</td> <td>96,886</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$20,001 +</td> <td>21,451</td> <td>22,996</td> <td>24,933</td> <td>25,834</td> <td>27,685</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>693,478</td> <td>684,448</td> <td>679,456</td> <td>674,392</td> <td>665,709</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Annual rate range	Dec-17	Dec-18	Dec-19	Dec-20	Dec-21	\$0 - \$500	215,836	202,536	195,244	198,884	198,932	\$501 - \$2,000	73,711	73,711	71,523	73,598	70,368	\$2,001 - \$5,000	147,085	144,619	140,173	134,356	138,773	\$5,001 - \$10,000	147,202	150,351	152,601	147,038	143,059	\$10,001 - \$20,000	86,112	90,235	94,977	94,682	96,886	\$20,001 +	21,451	22,996	24,933	25,834	27,685	Total	693,478	684,448	679,456	674,392	665,709																																																																																	
Income type	Dec-17	Dec-18	Dec-19	Dec-20	Dec-21																																																																																																																																																																					
Actual, declared or derived (e.g. ATO, ISO, overseas)	481,210	472,086	471,805	459,394	474,704																																																																																																																																																																					
Default or deemed (e.g. 2/3 arrears, indexed nil)	132,540	134,023	127,717	126,476	109,869																																																																																																																																																																					
Estimated income	32,902	31,893	34,001	42,815	35,483																																																																																																																																																																					
Post-separation income or no income details	1,045	937	781	717	749																																																																																																																																																																					
Total***	647,707	639,943	634,304	629,302	620,710																																																																																																																																																																					
Annual rate range	Dec-17	Dec-18	Dec-19	Dec-20	Dec-21																																																																																																																																																																					
\$0 - \$500	215,836	202,536	195,244	198,884	198,932																																																																																																																																																																					
\$501 - \$2,000	73,711	73,711	71,523	73,598	70,368																																																																																																																																																																					
\$2,001 - \$5,000	147,085	144,619	140,173	134,356	138,773																																																																																																																																																																					
\$5,001 - \$10,000	147,202	150,351	152,601	147,038	143,059																																																																																																																																																																					
\$10,001 - \$20,000	86,112	90,235	94,977	94,682	96,886																																																																																																																																																																					
\$20,001 +	21,451	22,996	24,933	25,834	27,685																																																																																																																																																																					
Total	693,478	684,448	679,456	674,392	665,709																																																																																																																																																																					
<p>The median annual assessment for Private Collect cases is much higher than for Agency Collect cases across all quarters.</p>		<p>Declared taxable income was used to calculate child support payable for the majority (77%) of payers in active cases from December 2017 to December 2021 and the proportion has remained stable over this period.</p>	<p>In the December quarter 2021, more than 144,000 cases were assessed at the Minimum Annual Rate, which equates to around \$8.50 per week. Almost 65% of these were Agency cases. The proportion of all cases that were assessed at the Minimal Annual Rate has reduced from around 22% in the December 2017 quarter to around 22% in the December 2021 quarter.</p>	<p>The proportion of active cases with an annual liability of \$0-\$500 has stayed relatively constant over the 5 years to December 2021 with around 30% of cases (198,932) having an annual liability of \$0-\$500 in the December quarter 2021.</p>																																																																																																																																																																						

Child Support Program - December quarter 2021

Indigenous status of payers and payees, December quarter 2021		Number of cases by number of children in a case, December quarter 2021		Number of payers & payees involved in one or more child support cases, December quarter 2021																																																													
			<p>In Agency Collect cases, almost 7% of payees and over 5% of payers identify as Indigenous. In Private Collect cases, over 7% of payers and almost 4% of payees identify as Indigenous.</p> <p>The majority of both Agency Collect and Private Collect cases involve one child. Cases involving two or more children are more likely to be Private Collect cases.</p> <p>43,808 payers (7.1%) and 47,135 payees (7.7%) had a more than one active case in the December quarter 2021.</p>																																																														
<p>Number of children by age, December quarter 2017 to December quarter 2021***</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th rowspan="2">Dec-17</th> <th colspan="4">Child age category (years)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>0 to 4</th> <th>5 to 9</th> <th>10 to 14</th> <th>15 and over</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="4">Private Collect</td> <td>Dec-17</td> <td>109,137</td> <td>107,961</td> <td>181,619</td> <td>109,183</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec-18</td> <td>101,538</td> <td>167,643</td> <td>183,119</td> <td>107,093</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec-19</td> <td>96,406</td> <td>159,063</td> <td>184,520</td> <td>105,647</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec-20</td> <td>93,274</td> <td>156,264</td> <td>184,931</td> <td>107,563</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="4">Agency Collect</td> <td>Dec-17</td> <td>89,676</td> <td>152,560</td> <td>183,631</td> <td>109,241</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec-18</td> <td>88,247</td> <td>140,078</td> <td>183,667</td> <td>118,189</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec-19</td> <td>86,738</td> <td>138,989</td> <td>187,750</td> <td>117,256</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec-20</td> <td>85,537</td> <td>138,798</td> <td>191,907</td> <td>116,561</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec-21</td> <td>82,941</td> <td>136,730</td> <td>191,958</td> <td>118,203</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec-21</td> <td>49,854</td> <td>132,792</td> <td>190,073</td> <td>120,220</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Dec-17	Child age category (years)				0 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 and over	Private Collect	Dec-17	109,137	107,961	181,619	109,183	Dec-18	101,538	167,643	183,119	107,093	Dec-19	96,406	159,063	184,520	105,647	Dec-20	93,274	156,264	184,931	107,563	Agency Collect	Dec-17	89,676	152,560	183,631	109,241	Dec-18	88,247	140,078	183,667	118,189	Dec-19	86,738	138,989	187,750	117,256	Dec-20	85,537	138,798	191,907	116,561	Dec-21	82,941	136,730	191,958	118,203	Dec-21	49,854	132,792	190,073	120,220	<p>FTB Part A children by Maintenance Action Test (MAT) Category, December quarter 2021</p>	<p>International child support cases by payer residency, December quarter 2021</p>	<p>Amount of child support assessments raised and liabilities collected by Services Australia for Agency Collect cases, 2016-17 to 2020-21*</p>
			Dec-17	Child age category (years)																																																													
	0 to 4	5 to 9		10 to 14	15 and over																																																												
Private Collect	Dec-17	109,137	107,961	181,619	109,183																																																												
	Dec-18	101,538	167,643	183,119	107,093																																																												
	Dec-19	96,406	159,063	184,520	105,647																																																												
	Dec-20	93,274	156,264	184,931	107,563																																																												
Agency Collect	Dec-17	89,676	152,560	183,631	109,241																																																												
	Dec-18	88,247	140,078	183,667	118,189																																																												
	Dec-19	86,738	138,989	187,750	117,256																																																												
	Dec-20	85,537	138,798	191,907	116,561																																																												
Dec-21	82,941	136,730	191,958	118,203																																																													
Dec-21	49,854	132,792	190,073	120,220																																																													
<p>*** There are children with missing age values. Therefore, row totals for a quarter may not match with the child population shown elsewhere.</p> <p>Agency Collect cases have a smaller number of children aged 0-4 years and a larger number involving 15 years and over, compared to Private Collect cases.</p>		<p>Under the Family Tax Benefit Part A Maintenance Action Test, separated parents must take reasonable action to obtain child support to be eligible for more than the base rate of FTB Part A. In certain circumstances parents may be exempt from the Maintenance Action Test. Percentages in this chart may not total 100 per cent due to rounding.</p>		<p>In the December quarter 2021, there were 37,402 international child support cases. In 10,643 cases, a payer living in Australia sent child support to a payee and child(ren) living overseas. In 26,759 cases, the payer lived overseas and sent child support to a payee and child(ren) living in Australia.</p> <p>Source: Services Australia's International Business Area.</p>																																																													

Source: Services Australia's Child Support Extract Data (CSED) unless stated otherwise. Data is based on the relationship case count, excludes spousal maintenance cases, and includes Agency Collect and Private Collect cases. These figures may not align with those published elsewhere due to different reporting methodologies.

Notes:

- The number of children includes child support children only and excludes other dependent children
- The data excludes 4,823 children in 2,711 cases for whom payer and payee care details cannot be determined (e.g. data invalid as it exceeds 365 care nights combined). As the care levels that payers and payees have of different children in a case may vary, a payer or payee may be counted in more than one category.
- This figure includes child support received by Services Australia in the financial year for liabilities raised in previous years. The percentage collected for assessments raised in the financial year is not able to be calculated based on current available data.

Last updated: January 23, 2024