

Finance Survey: Family Fees



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2008

The ITCA has conducted a national survey of Part C Coordinators for over 5 years. The goal of the survey was to gather relevant information and make it available to members on a regular basis. The initial survey was lengthy, detailed and required substantial time on the part of State Coordinators to complete. As a result, participation in survey completion never achieved the level that was intended. In 2008, the Data Committee was charged with revising the survey, eliminating data that was already being collected by other sources and streamlining the process to facilitate a higher level of participation. The survey has been divided into four topic areas. The first topical area to be distributed for completion was Finance and the survey was distributed in late 2008.

The Finance Survey was divided into five major areas:

- Fund Sources used to Support Part C
- Family Cost Participation
- Family Fees
- Use of Private Insurance; and
- Use of Public Insurance.

The survey data represent the 38 state and territory members who completed the survey by January 2009. This is the third in a series of reports from the Finance Survey and is focused on Family Fees. The data is reported by frequency as well as cross tab analyses by type of Lead Agency, the OSEP eligibility category and the Regional Resource Center geographic alignment. The frequency tables were produced in SPSS and include frequencies of no responses. The charts in the report reflect the responses of those states who answered the questions. The “no responses” are excluded from the charts. ITCA draws no conclusions from the data analysis but simply reports the data. All data are aggregated and the individual state responses are kept confidential. The remaining portions of the Finance survey are currently being processed and will be released in the next several months.

Survey Participant Demographics

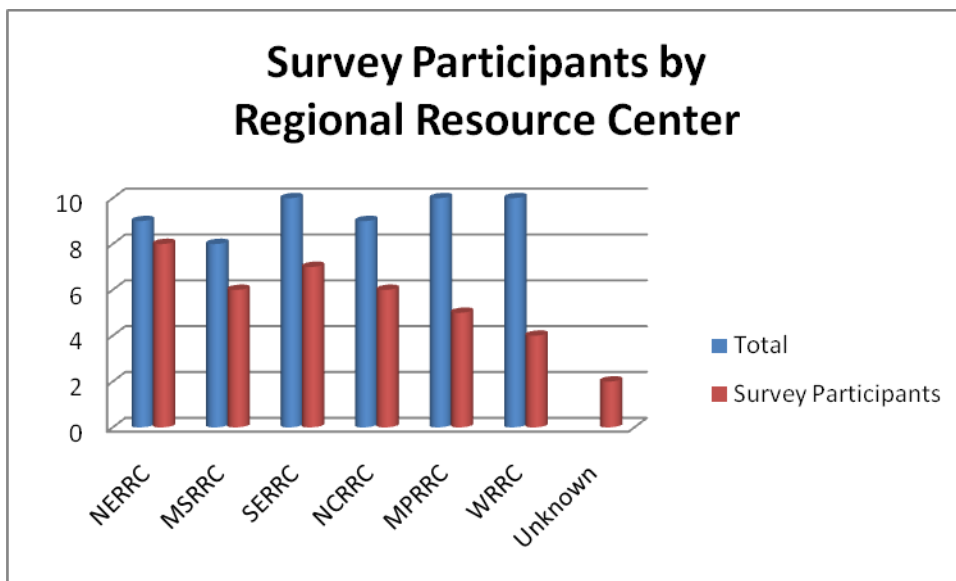
State Participation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Alaska	1	2.6	2.6	2.6
American Samoa	1	2.6	2.6	5.3
Arkansas	1	2.6	2.6	7.9
California	1	2.6	2.6	10.5
Colorado	1	2.6	2.6	13.2
Connecticut	1	2.6	2.6	15.8
Florida	1	2.6	2.6	18.4
Hawaii	1	2.6	2.6	21.1
Illinois	1	2.6	2.6	23.7
Indiana	1	2.6	2.6	26.3
Iowa	1	2.6	2.6	28.9
Kansas	1	2.6	2.6	31.6
Kentucky	1	2.6	2.6	34.2
Louisiana	1	2.6	2.6	36.8
Maine	1	2.6	2.6	39.5
Maryland	1	2.6	2.6	42.1
Massachusetts	1	2.6	2.6	44.7
Michigan	1	2.6	2.6	47.4
Minnesota	1	2.6	2.6	50.0
Missouri	1	2.6	2.6	52.6
Montana	1	2.6	2.6	55.3
Nebraska	1	2.6	2.6	57.9
New Hampshire	1	2.6	2.6	60.5
New Jersey	1	2.6	2.6	63.2
New Mexico	1	2.6	2.6	65.8
New York	1	2.6	2.6	68.4
North Carolina	1	2.6	2.6	71.1
Northern Marianas	1	2.6	2.6	73.7
Oklahoma	1	2.6	2.6	76.3
Rhode Island	1	2.6	2.6	78.9
South Dakota	1	2.6	2.6	81.6
Tennessee	1	2.6	2.6	84.2
Texas	1	2.6	2.6	86.8
Utah	1	2.6	2.6	89.5
Virginia	1	2.6	2.6	92.1
West Virginia	1	2.6	2.6	94.7
No response	2	5.3	5.3	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

Participation by RRC region

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Northeast	8	21.1	21.1	21.1
Mid South	6	15.8	15.8	36.8
Southeast	7	18.4	18.4	55.3
North Central	6	15.8	15.8	71.1
Mountain Plains	5	13.2	13.2	84.2
Western	4	10.5	10.5	94.7
No response	2	5.3	5.3	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

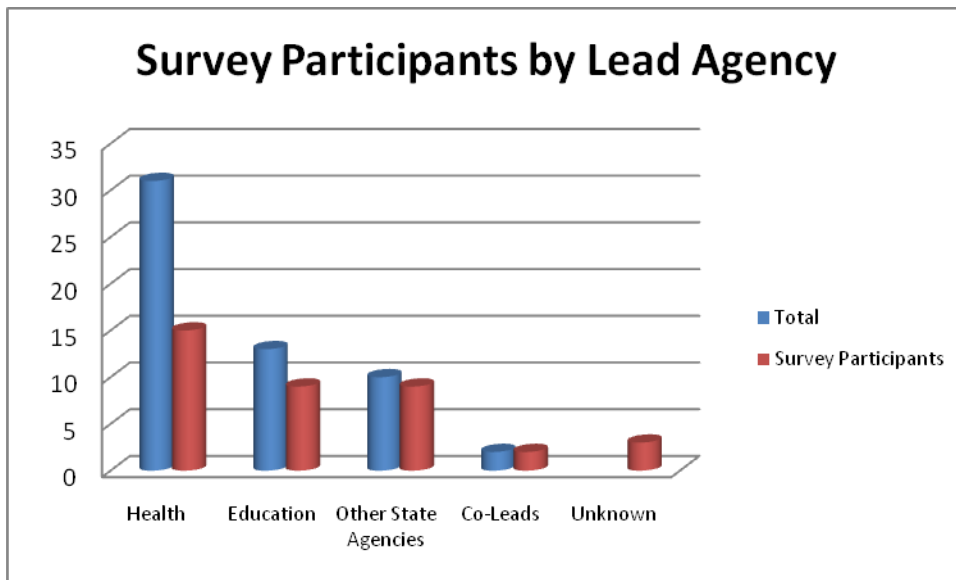
Survey participants ranged from a high of eight states (89%) in the Northeast region to a low of four states (40%) in the Western region. Two states completed the survey but did not identify themselves so their regional categorization cannot be determined. This will also be the case for Lead Agency and Eligibility Status.



Participation by State Lead Agency

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Health	15	39.5	39.5	39.5
	Education	9	23.7	23.7	63.2
	Other	9	23.7	23.7	86.8
	Co-Lead	2	5.3	5.3	92.1
	No response	3	7.9	7.9	100.0
	Total	38	100.0	100.0	

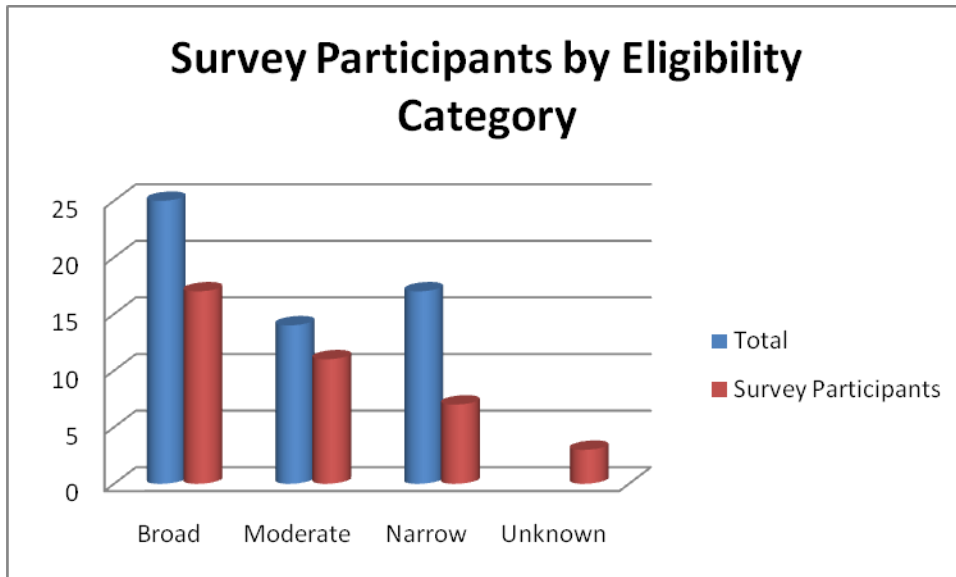
Fifteen states (48%) with Health as the Lead Agency participated in the survey. Nine states (69%) with Education as the Lead Agency and nine states (90%) with "Other State Agencies" as the lead participated in the survey. Both states that have co-lead agencies participated in the survey.



Participation by OSEP Eligibility Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Broad	17	44.7	44.7	44.7
	Moderate	11	28.9	28.9	73.7
	Narrow	7	18.4	18.4	92.1
	No response	3	7.9	7.9	100.0
Total		38	100.0	100.0	

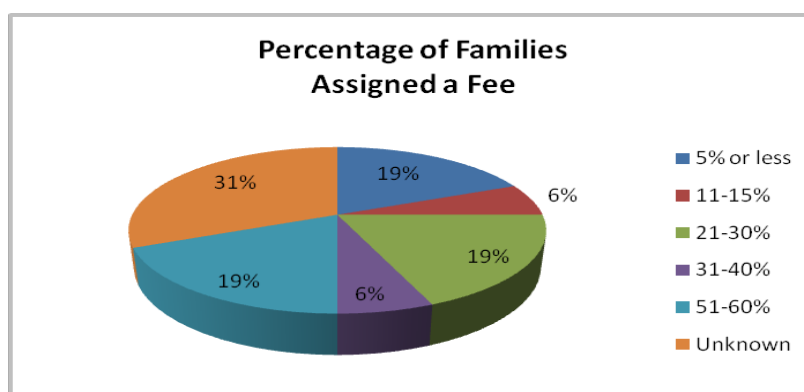
For the purpose of analysis, the OSEP eligibility categories were used. Seventeen states (68%) identified as having broad eligibility criteria completed the survey. Eleven states (79%) identified as having moderate eligibility and seven states (41%) identified as having narrow eligibility completed the survey.



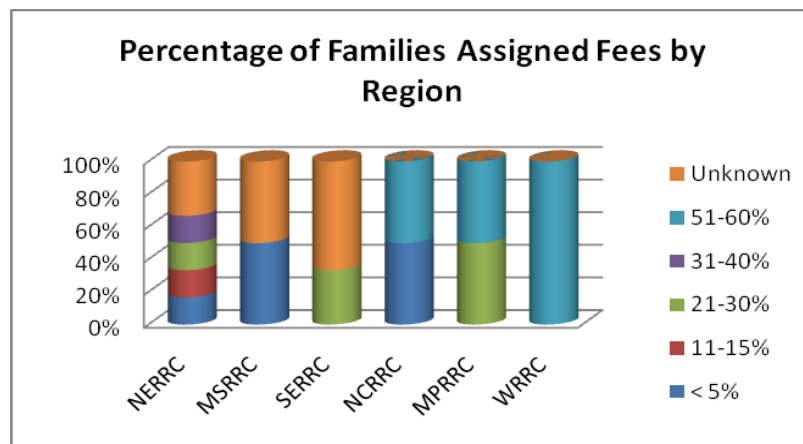
Survey Questions

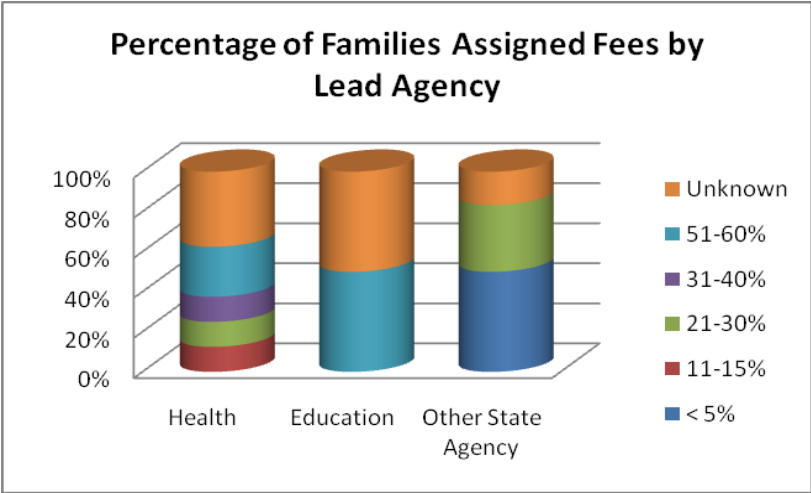
What percentage of families enrolled in Part C are assigned fees?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5% or less	3	7.9	7.9	7.9
	11-15%	1	2.6	2.6	10.5
	21-30%	3	7.9	7.9	18.4
	31-40%	1	2.6	2.6	21.1
	51-60%	3	7.9	7.9	28.9
	Unknown	5	13.2	13.2	42.1
	No response	22	57.9	57.9	100.0
	Total	38	100.0	100.0	

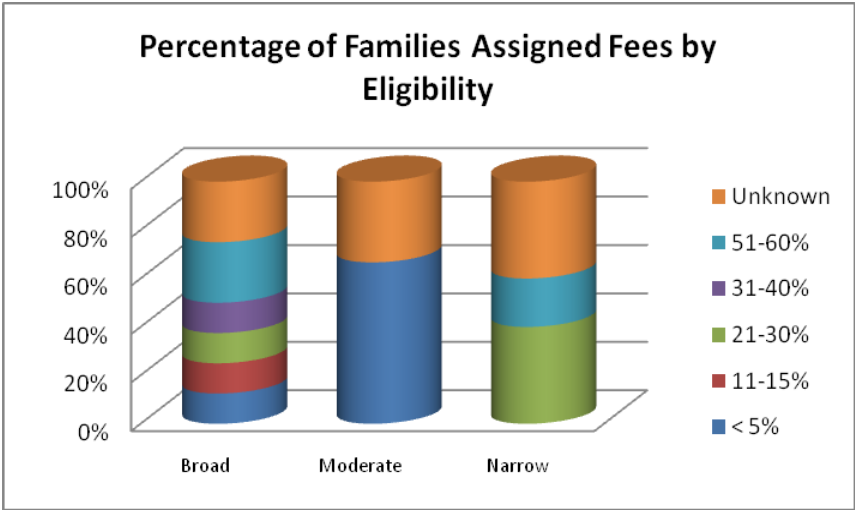


Of the sixteen states that responded to this question, 31% did not know the percentage of families that were assigned a fee. The Southeast region had the highest number of states (2) that did not know the percentage of families assigned a fee. The North Central, Mountain Plains and Western regions each have one state with 51-60% of families who were assigned fees.





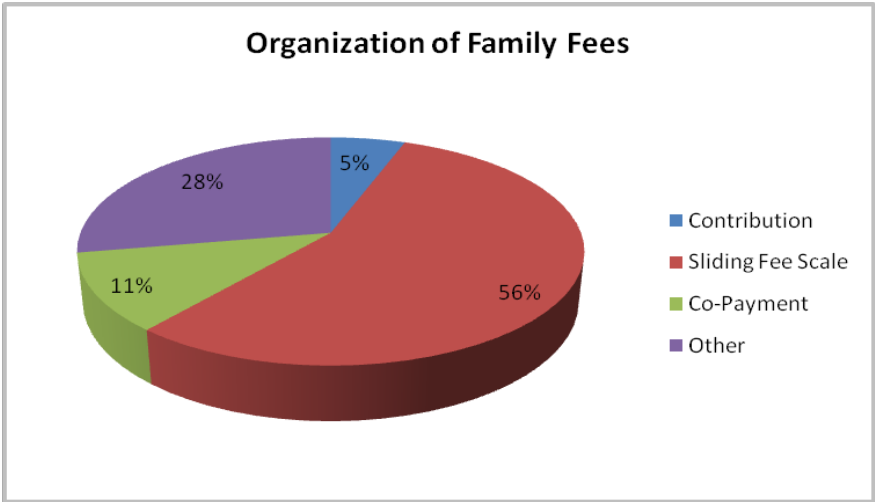
The Education Lead states are equally split between one state unknown and one state with 51-60% of families assigned a fee. Health Lead states have a broader range of families who have been assigned fees.



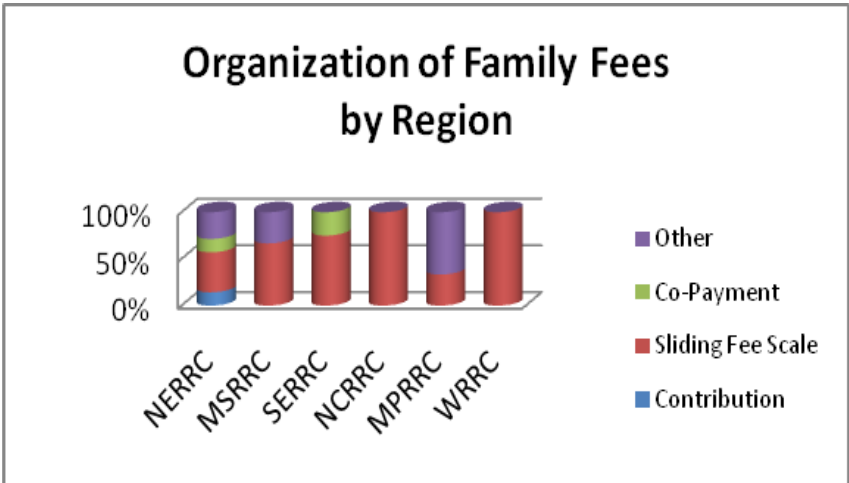
Of the Moderate Eligibility states, two (67%) have 5% or fewer families who have been assigned fees. Narrow Eligibility states have the highest percentage (40%/2 states) that do not know the percentage of families assigned fees. States with broad eligibility are spread across the spectrum.

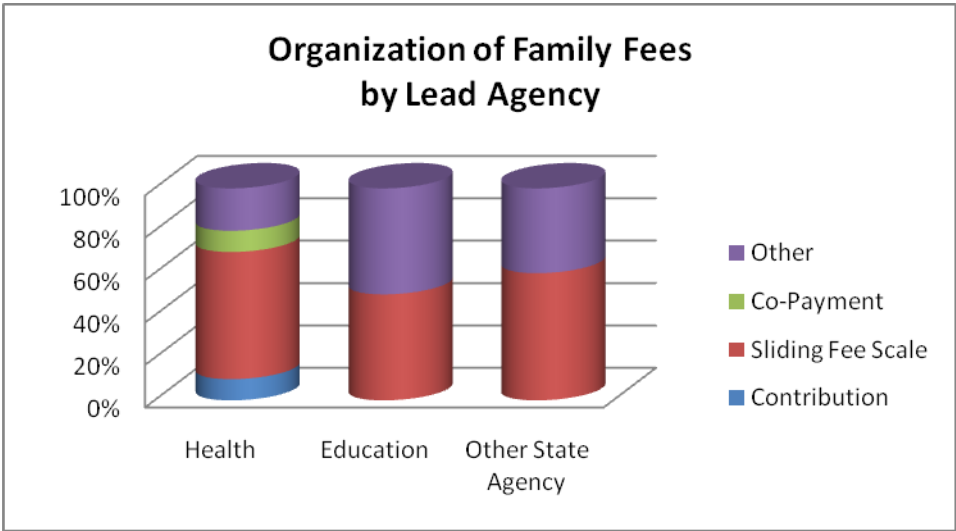
How are family fees organized?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Contribution or donation	1	2.6	2.6	2.6
Sliding fee scale	10	26.3	26.3	28.9
Co Payment and sliding Fee	2	5.3	5.3	34.2
Other	5	13.2	13.2	47.4
No response	20	52.6	52.6	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

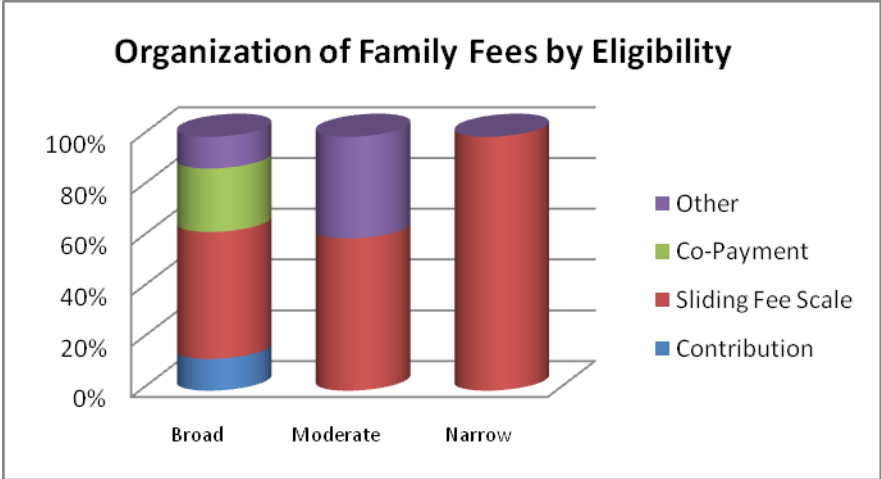


The majority of states (12) that utilize family fees use a sliding fee scale. This is also true of five of the six regions. Only the Mountain Plains region did not identify sliding fee scale as the primary method for organizing family fees.





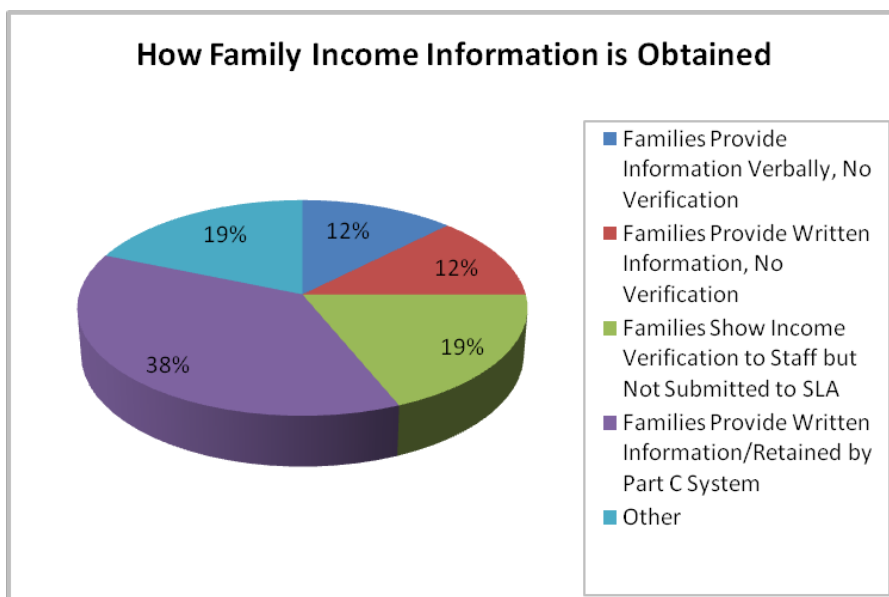
The sliding fee scale is the primary method for family fees in all Lead Agencies as well as across all eligibility categories. Both Health Lead Agencies and States defined with Broad Eligibility have more diversity in how their family fees are organized.

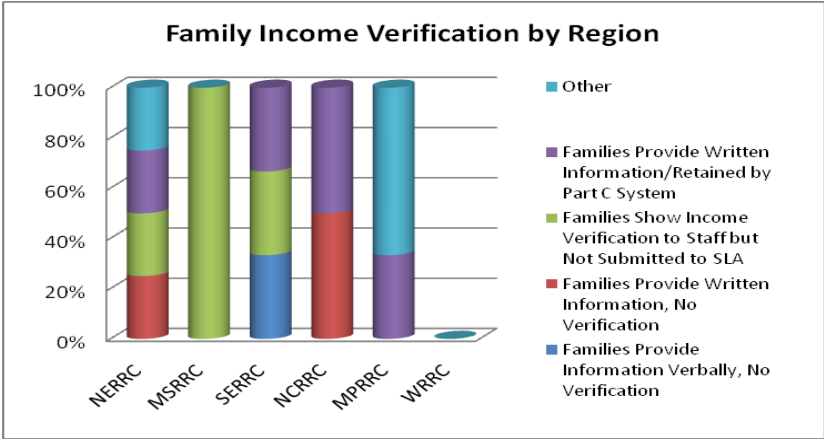


Identify the approach to obtaining family income that most accurately describes how information is obtained from families.

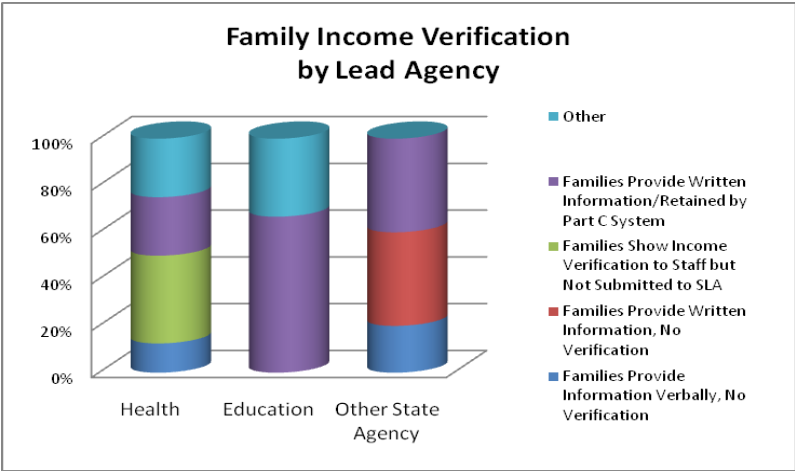
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Families provide their information verbally. We do not ask for any verification in writing.	2	5.3	5.3	5.3
Families provide their income information in writing. We do not ask for any verification in writing.	2	5.3	5.3	10.5
Families show income verification to appropriate staff but do not submit copies to Lead Agency	3	7.9	7.9	18.4
Families must provide written income information which is retained by the Part C system	6	15.8	15.8	34.2
Other	3	7.9	7.9	42.1
No response	22	57.9	57.9	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

Six states (38%) responding to this question require written information from families and this information is maintained by the State Lead Agency.

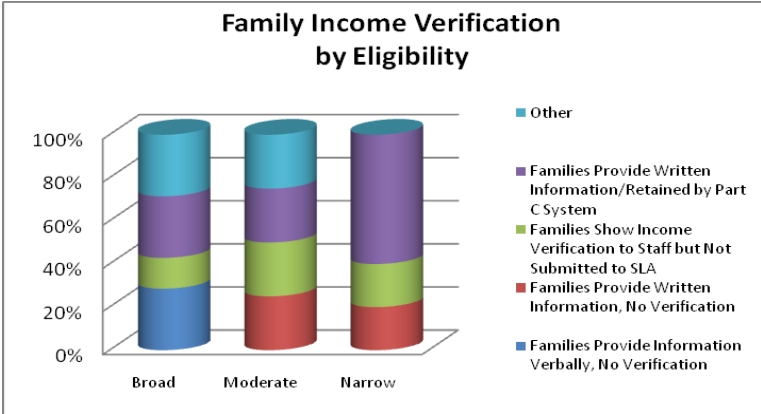




There is a great deal of variation across RRC regions in regard to income verification. States in the North East region utilize four different means for verifying income while states in the Mid South region utilize only one form. States from the Western region did not respond to this question.



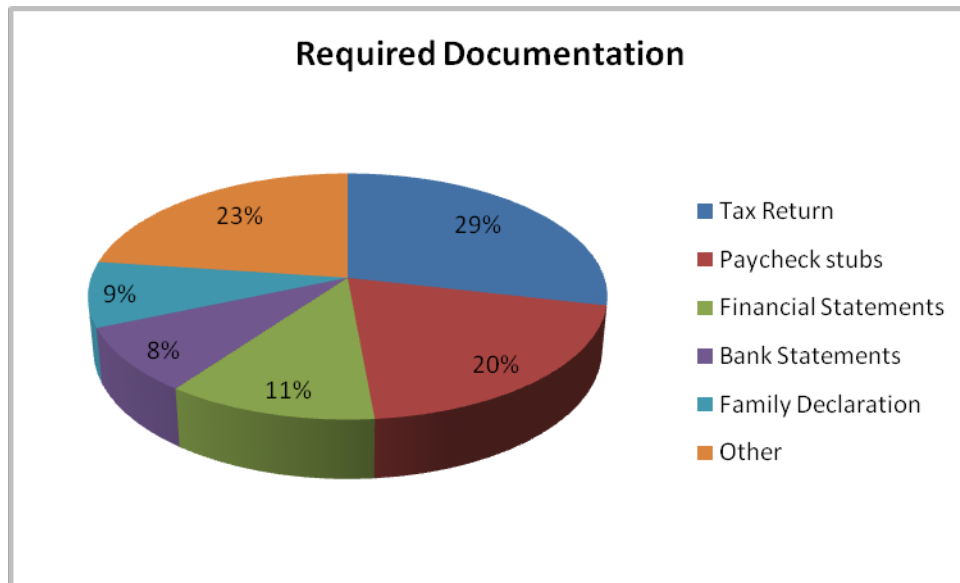
The same variation that was seen by region is also present in analyzing the data by type of Lead Agency and by Eligibility .

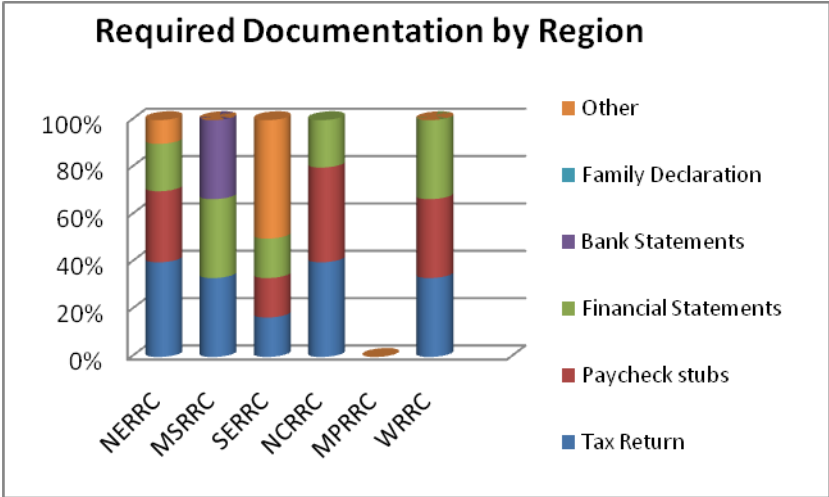


What kind of documentation is required to verify family income?

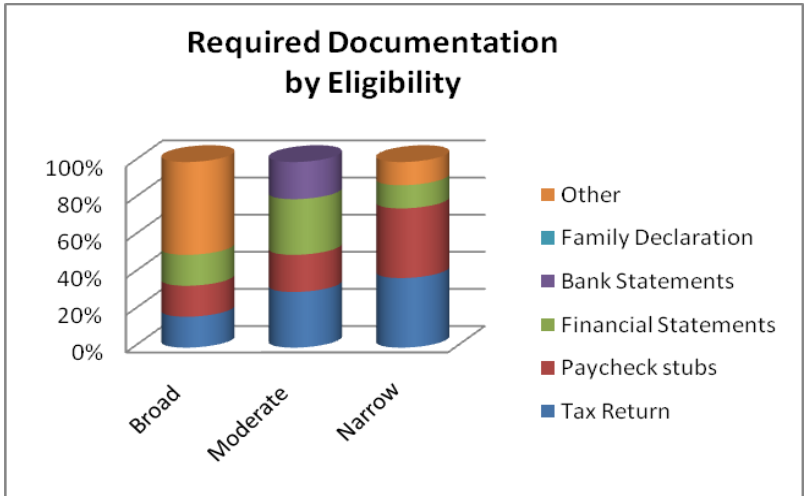
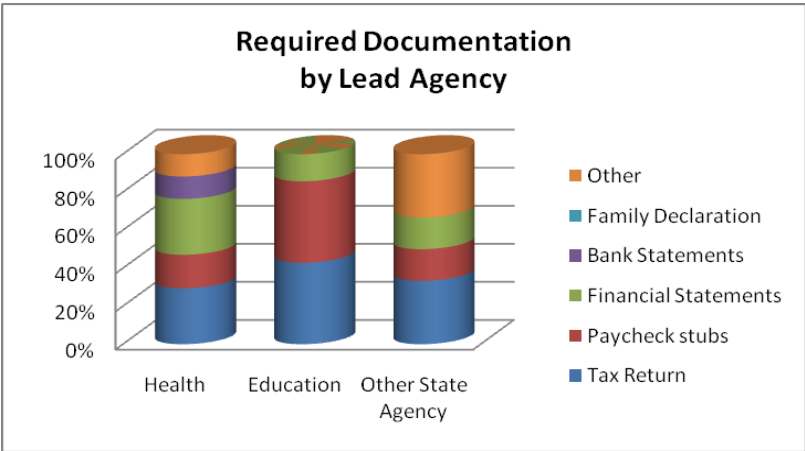
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Income tax return	1	2.6	2.6	2.6
Income tax returns, Weekly/biweekly stubs	2	5.3	5.3	7.9
Income tax, Financial Statement, Bank Statements	2	5.3	5.3	13.2
Income tax, Financial Statements, Weekly/biweekly pay stubs	5	13.2	13.2	26.3
Other	4	10.5	10.5	36.8
No response	24	63.2	63.2	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

While tax returns are the dominant method of verifying family income, nine states (64%) responding to this question require more than one source of data.



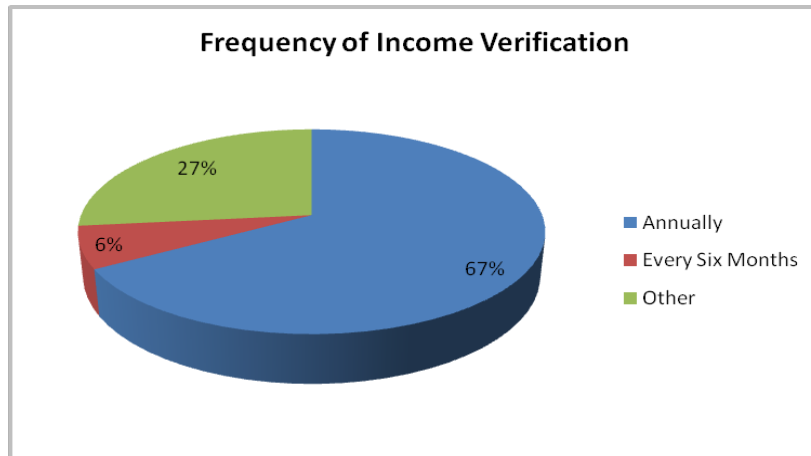


Paycheck stubs and tax returns are the primary sources in four of the six regions as well as by Lead Agency and Eligibility. Five of the regions utilize some type of financial statements. States in the Mountain Plains region did not respond to this question.

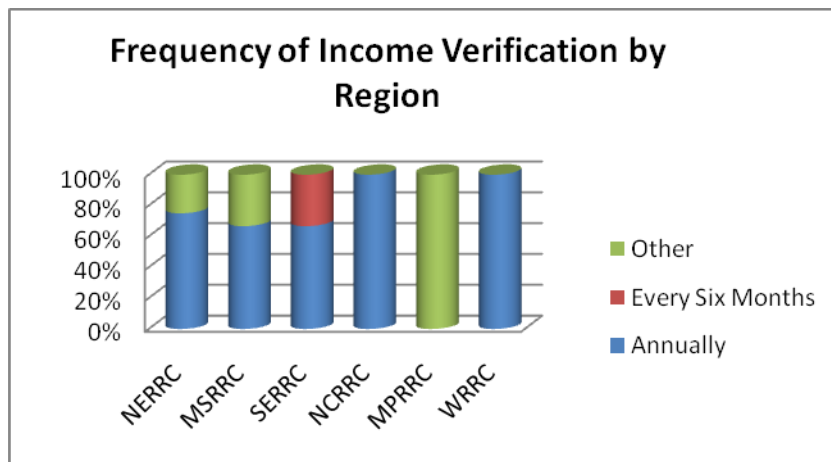


How often is income verification/documentation required?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Annually	10	26.3	26.3
	Every six months	1	2.6	28.9
	Other	4	10.5	39.5
	No response	23	60.5	100.0
Total		38	100.0	



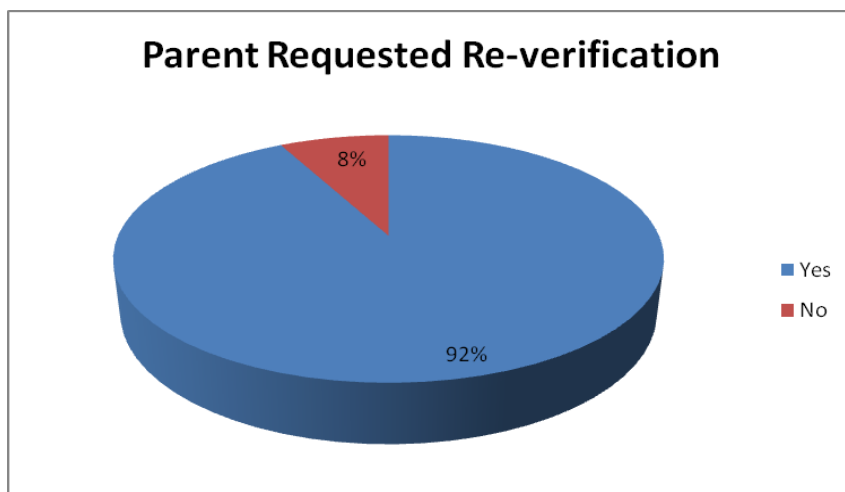
Ten states (67%) require income verification on an annual basis. In the South East region, at least one state requires that income be verified every six months. States that answered "other" indicated they verified income as needed or at the time of enrollment. Annual verification was the majority response for both Lead Agency and Eligibility.



Can a family request re-verification at any time if they believe that their current income/expenses have changed?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	12	31.6	31.6	31.6
No	1	2.6	2.6	34.2
No response	25	65.8	65.8	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

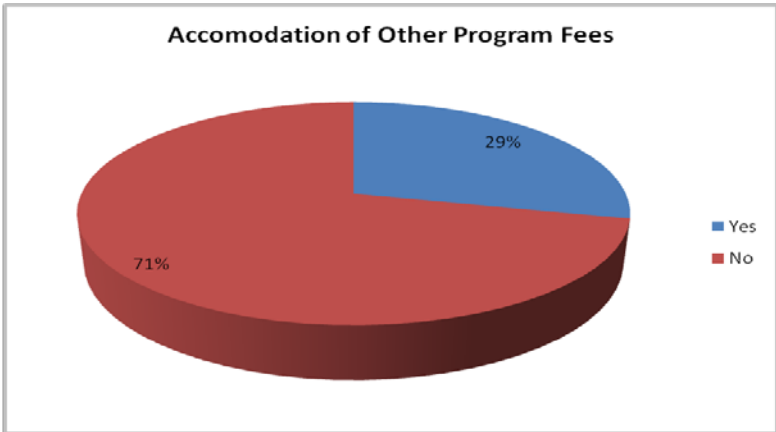
The ability of parents to request that their income be re-verified was almost universal regardless of region, Lead Agency or Eligibility status.



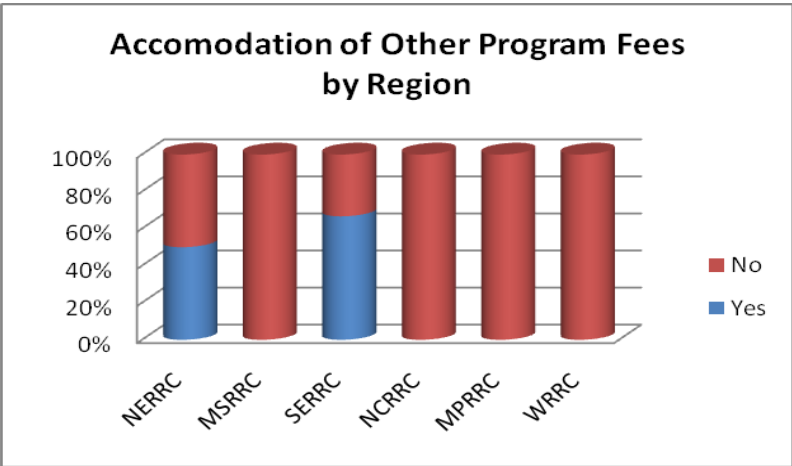
When assessing the family's ability to pay, are co-payments, deductibles, co-insurance and family fees assessed by other programs recognized?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	4	10.5	10.5	10.5
No	10	26.3	26.3	36.8
No response	24	63.2	63.2	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

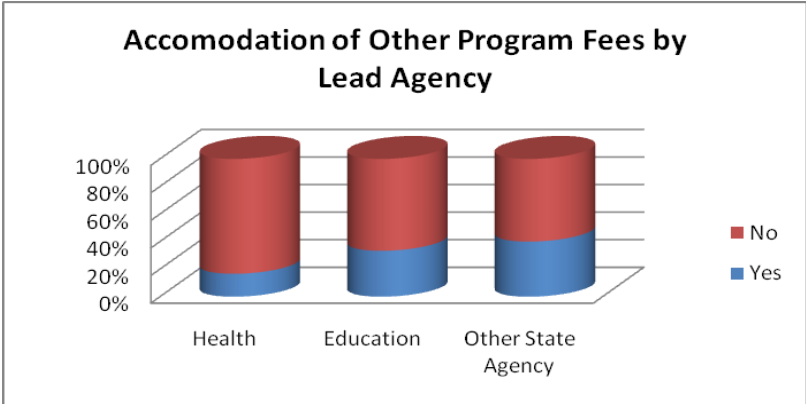
Children may be enrolled in a variety of programs that also require financial participation on the part of the family. This question attempted to determine if those other fees were considered when making a determination of ability to pay. Of the fourteen states responding to this question, only four states (29%) indicated they considered other program fees.



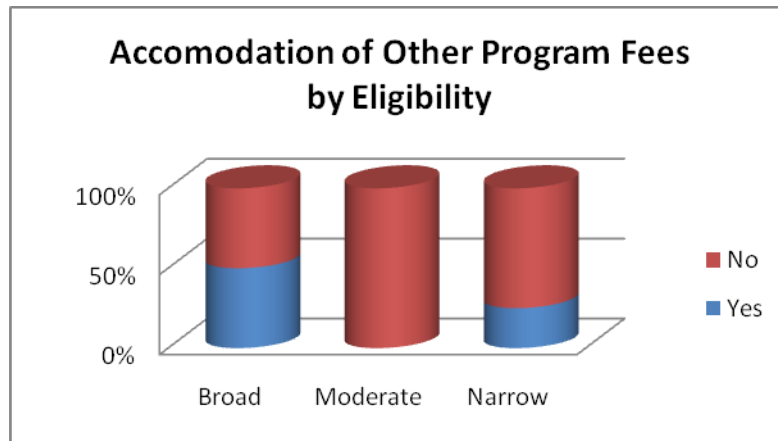
States responding to this question from the North East and South East regions took other program fees into consideration.



States that considered other program fees were represented across all Lead Agencies types.



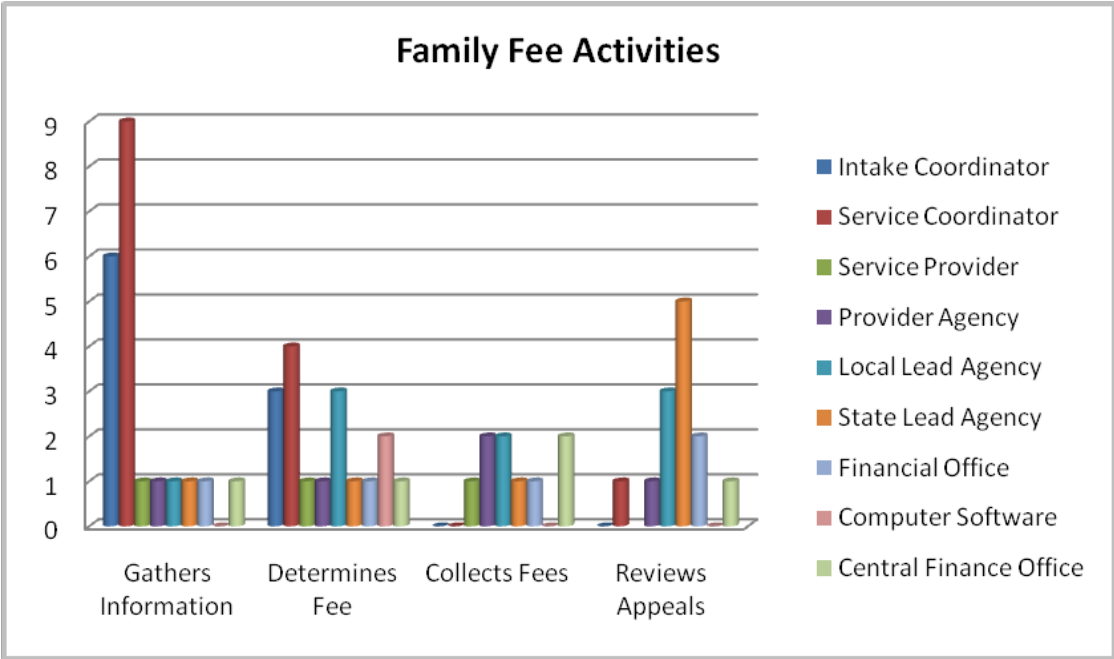
States responding to the survey that are classified as Moderate Eligibility did not consider other program fees when determining a family's ability to pay. Broad eligibility states were the most likely to consider other program fees.



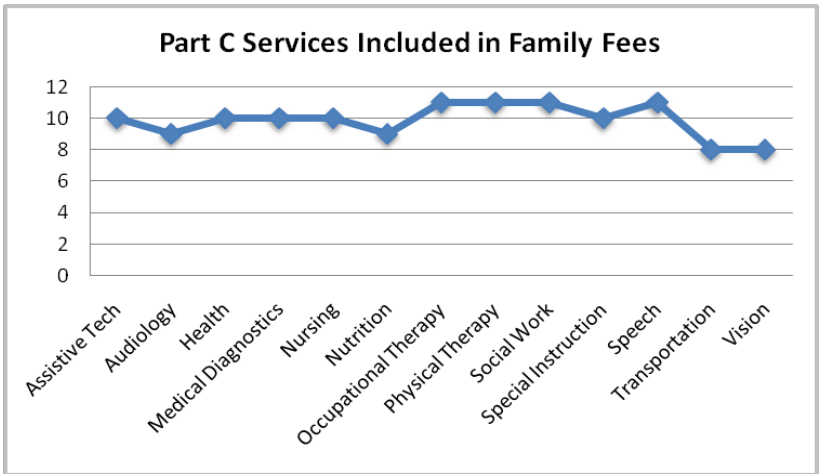
The next question was designed to determine who was responsible for specific activities related to the family's placement on the family fee scale. The activities include:

- Gathering financial information;
- Determining fees;
- Collecting fees; and
- Reviewing appeals/adjustments.

The chart on the next page identifies the roles in carrying out the activities related to the family fee scale. The intake coordinator and service coordinator have the primary role in gathering information and that held true across regions, lead agencies and eligibility. The same two were primarily responsible for establishing the fee that the family would pay. Collection of fees was spread across the choices with service provider, local lead agency and Central Finance Office with a slight edge. The State Lead Agency is the primary entity that reviews appeals. The cross-tab analysis documented the same results.



The survey sought information on what services were included in the family fee schedule. All States (11) with a family fee schedule that responded to this question include Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Social Work and Speech Language Pathology in their fee schedule. Transportation and Vision were the two services with the lowest number of states (8) including them in the fee schedule.



Do you provide training for persons completing family fee paperwork?

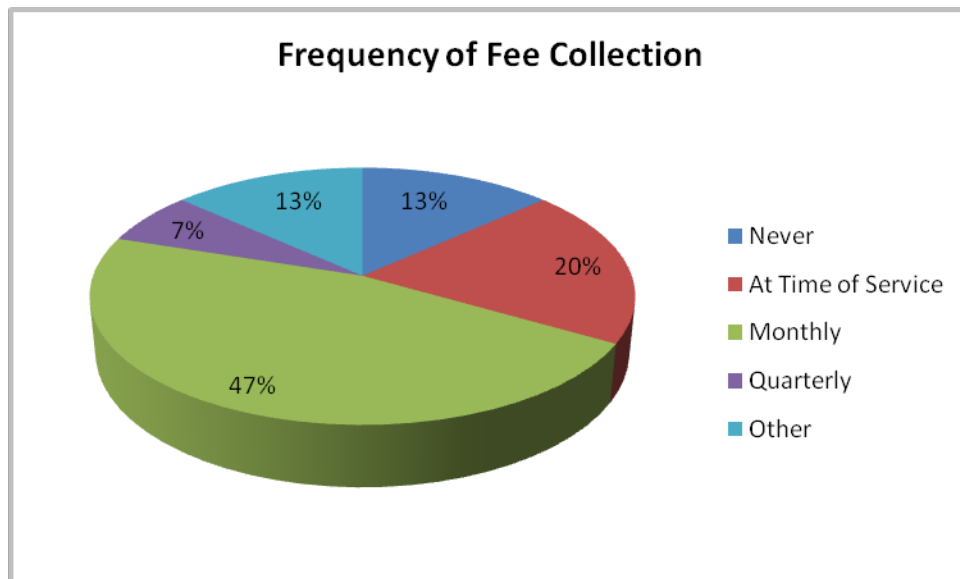
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	13	34.2	34.2	34.2
No response	25	65.8	65.8	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

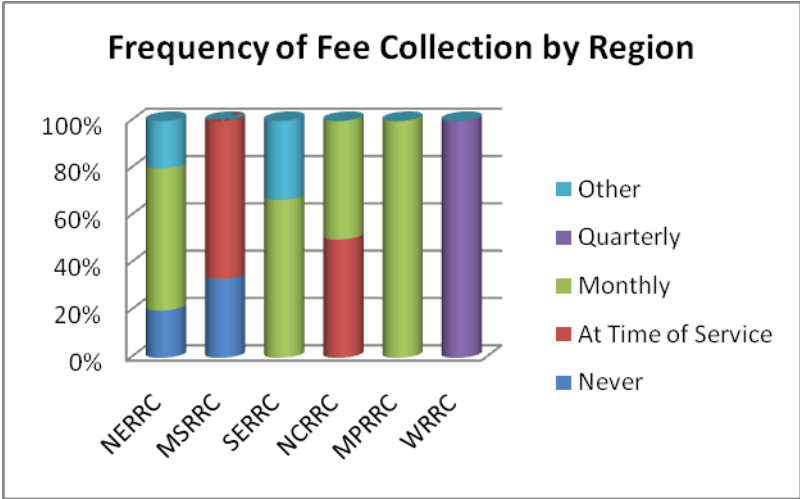
Because the response to this question was 100%, no crosstab analysis was conducted.

How frequently are fees collected?

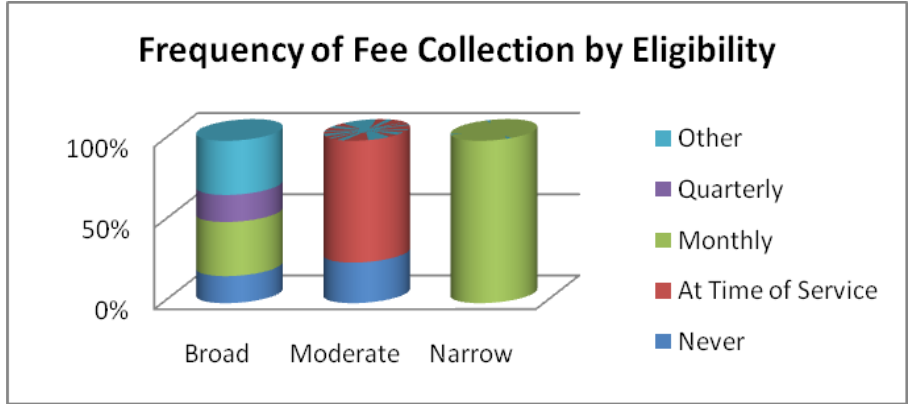
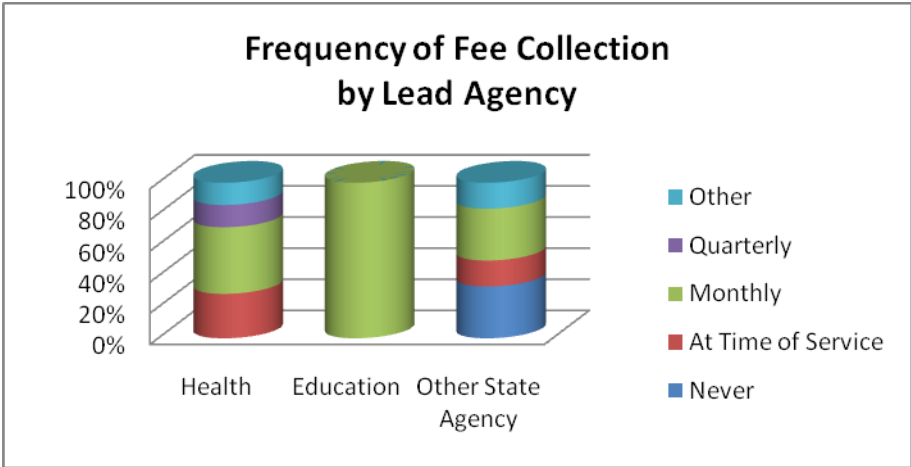
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Never	2	5.3	5.3	5.3
At time of service	3	7.9	7.9	13.2
Monthly	7	18.4	18.4	31.6
Quarterly	1	2.6	2.6	34.2
Other	2	5.3	5.3	39.5
No response	23	60.5	60.5	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

Of the fifteen states that responded to this question, seven states (47%) collect family fees on a monthly basis. Two states (13%) never collect the fees.





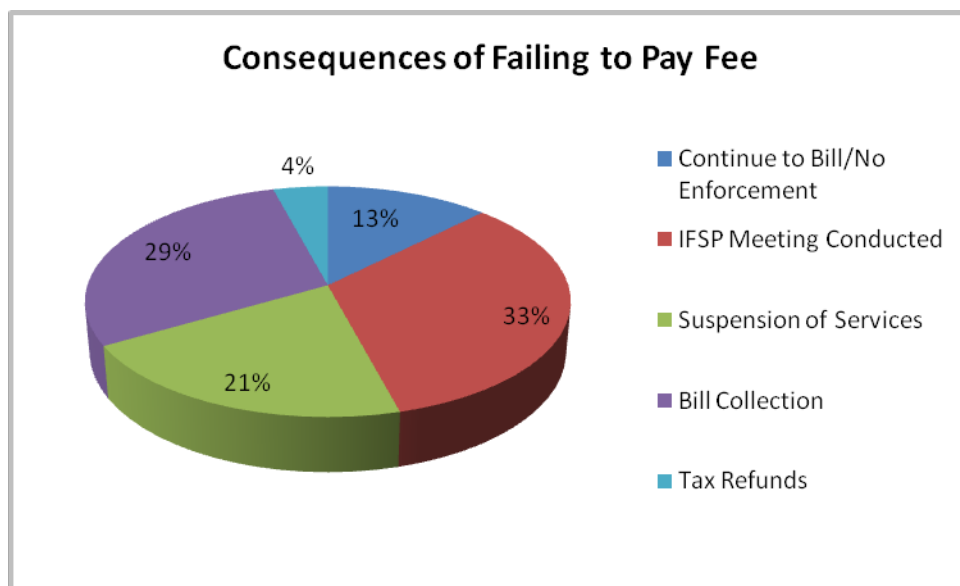
There are variations across regions, Lead Agencies and by eligibility. In the Mid South region, two states (67%) and three states (75%) with Moderate eligibility collect fees at the time of service.

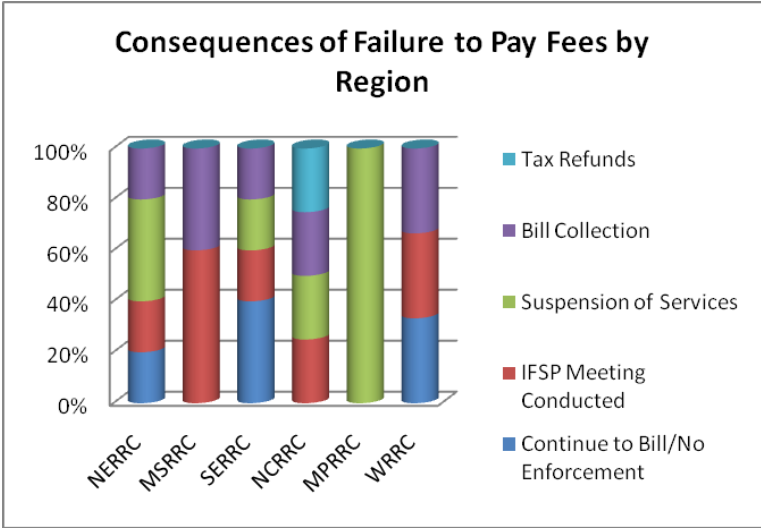


What happens when a family fails to pay their assigned fee?

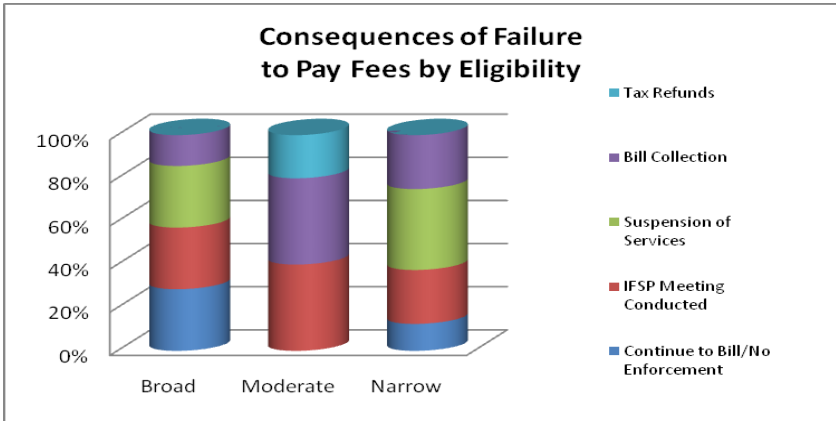
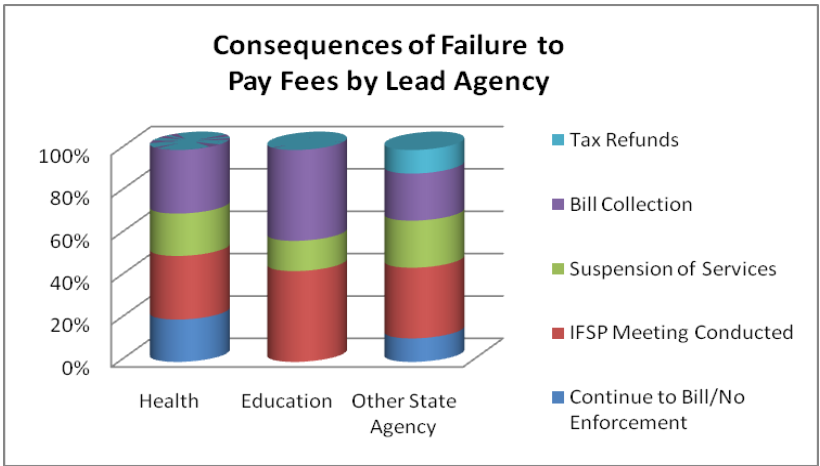
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Continue to bill, no enforcement	3	7.9	7.9	7.9
	IFSP meeting conducted	1	2.6	2.6	10.5
	Suspension of services	5	13.2	13.2	23.7
	IFSP Meeting, Bill Collection, Tax refunds	1	2.6	2.6	26.3
	IFSP Meeting, Bill Collection	6	15.8	15.8	42.1
	No response	22	57.9	57.9	100.0
	Total	38	100.0	100.0	

Of the sixteen states that responded to this question, three (13%) states continue to bill the family but there are no consequences. States utilize several options when families fail to pay their fee. The most frequently used option is suspension of services to the child.





All regions with the exception of Mountain Plains use bill collection as an option for failure to pay fees. Accessing tax refunds is an option for “other state agency” leads and Moderate eligibility states.



If fees are collected at the local level, are there procedures that must be followed regarding reporting of family fees?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes, earnings are subtracted from current payment	3	7.9	7.9	7.9
No	2	5.3	5.3	13.2
Not applicable	9	23.7	23.7	36.8
No response	24	63.2	63.2	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

Only three states that responded to this question have procedures for fees collected at the local level.

