

Child Support



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Questions & Answers



The Maryland Child Support Administration (CSEA) has prepared this booklet to help answer questions about child support and your case. We hope you will find what you are looking for here but encourage you to call or e-mail us if you have additional questions or concerns.

Contact Information

Maryland Child Support Customer Care Center
800-332-6347

Child Support Payment Information
800-723-9937

Maryland CSEA Website
www.dhr.state.md.us/csea/index.html



Customer Rights and Responsibilities

As a Customer of the Child Support Enforcement Administration (CSEA) you have the following rights and responsibilities:

- The right to available services regardless of your race, color, creed, national origin, or as defined by ADA.
- The right to information regarding client rights including a copy of this document and/or an explanation of client rights in a language of your choice, to the extent possible, and access to an interpreter in order to understand exercise and protect your rights.
- The right to have your case record kept private as required by State and Federal laws.
- The right to make suggestions or complaints when you think your services have been delayed or you disagree with a decision.
- The right to get appropriate services that follow State, Federal, and local laws and regulations.
- The right to be treated with respect and courtesy.
- The right to be informed about any fee required in order to receive services.

As a Customer of this agency you have a responsibility to:

- Treat staff with respect and courtesy,
- Give correct and complete information about persons involved in your case,
- Inform CSEA immediately about changes in legal custody, your address, employment, income and health insurance,
- Provide copies of all relevant court orders,
- Attend all scheduled appointments,
- Respond truthfully and timely to letters, notices or other inquiries from the Agency, and
- Notify your local Child Support office before filing any civil or criminal action concerning child support.



Who is eligible for child support services?

Any custodian of a minor child is eligible for services. This includes parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, court-appointed guardians, or others who are caring for a child. The services available include establishing paternity for their child(ren), establishing a court order for child support and/or medical support or collecting current or past due child support payments.

The non-custodial parent may apply for child support services to determine paternity of a child born out of wedlock, to sign up for voluntary wage withholding of child support, or to request modification of the child support ordered amount.

What services are available through the local office of child support?

The following services are available through your local office of child support:

1. Searching for the other parent
2. Legally establishing paternity
3. Obtaining a court order for child support and health insurance
4. Collecting support payments
5. Enforcing the court order
6. Reviewing and adjusting the court ordered support amount

(You have the right to obtain child support services in a timely manner. You can help by cooperating fully with your child support enforcement staff in any attempt they make on your behalf.)

The following services are NOT available through your local office of child support enforcement. Contact private counsel for help with these issues.

1. Divorce actions
2. Legal advice
3. Property settlements
4. Visitation and custody issues
5. Collection of private attorney's fees

How do I apply for child support services?

If you receive Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) or Medical Assistance, child support services will be provided free of charge. If not, you will need to complete an application for child support services with your local child support enforcement office and pay an application fee of \$25 with the submission of your application. To have an application mailed to you, or for further information, please contact the local child support enforcement office in your area, or telephone the Child Support Enforcement Administration at 800-332-6347. A separate application is required for each case. In addition to the \$25 application fee, your case will be charged an annual \$25, charged after you receive \$3,500 in child support collections for that year, assuming your case meets certain conditions.

Does my case qualify for the federally mandated \$25 fee?

Maryland law requires customers who have never received TCA for a related child support case to pay a \$25 annual collection fee. You must pay the \$25 annual collection fee if:

- You have received at least \$3,500 of child support within a 12 month period beginning October 1st of each year, and
- You have never received TCA for that child support case.

You do not have to pay the \$25 annual collection fee if:

- You have **not** received at least \$3,500 of child support within a 12 month period beginning October one of each year, or
- You have received TCA for that child support case.

What information will my local office need in order to process my case?

The following information will assist the local office in processing your case:

1. Full name and last known address of both parents and any other names each person is known by (for example, nicknames, aliases, etc.)
2. Dates of birth and documentation of Social Security numbers for both parents
3. A physical description with the most current photograph of the other parent
4. Children's birth certificates and social security numbers
5. Marriage license, separation order, divorce decree, protective or restraining order involving either parent, other support order, Affidavit of Parentage, or any other legal documents where paternity has been acknowledged
6. Name and address of the current or most recent employer of both parents
7. Any other additional information about the other parent which provides information about where he or she lives or works

How can I get information about my child support case?

The Maryland Child Support Administration has a toll-free Maryland Child Support Customer Care Center (1-800-332-6347) to handle all of your general questions and provide payment information. The Customer Care Center can accept requests for payment history, address changes, employment changes, and requests for enforcement of a court order.

If the information or assistance you need cannot be provided by the Customer Care Center, a work order will be prepared and emailed to your case specialist. After the information is reviewed by your case specialist, appropriate action will be taken

and, if necessary, you will be contacted within 20 days. If a work order is a priority matter, such as an issue for an upcoming court date, a driver's license suspension, or an employer with a wage lien question, you will be contacted within 48 hours.

Please allow 10 working days after a hearing date for updated information regarding your account to be posted to the case file. Please note: your calls will not be forwarded to the local child support office on a routine basis.

Which office should I go to?

Inquiries about your child support case are best handled through the Customer Care Center. The number is 800-332-6347.

What happens if the other parent does not live in Maryland?

Your child support enforcement office will work to establish paternity, collect support for the child, or resolve any issues you may have with your case, even if one parent lives in another state or country.

Do all states handle cases the same way?

Cases are not handled the same way in all states. While all states have the same goals of establishing paternity and child support orders and enforcement of child support orders, each state has its own child support process and its own methods of calculating child support.

How long does it take to establish a child support order?

Generally, a child support order will be established within 90-180 days. Several factors may delay the establishment process: the noncustodial parent lives out of state, cannot be located and served with a summons, is incarcerated, fails to appear for a settlement conference or a court hearing, or if there are problems verifying income.

How long does it take to process a case?

A person must be personally served with the notice of the proceedings to establish child support. Current and accurate information as to the non-custodial parent's residence and mailing address is essential. The longer it takes to locate and personally serve the person, the longer it will take to establish a child support order. The Child Support Enforcement Administration and your local child support office are required to follow all deadlines set by federal regulations and Maryland statute for processing your case. When one of the parents lives in another state, the other state's statutes and regulations also impact how long it takes to complete each step in the process.

What if I do not know where the other parent is?

If the location of the noncustodial parent is unknown, the child support enforcement office will conduct a search. To help do this we need as much information about that parent as possible. The more information provided the easier it will be to find the other parent. The following conditions make it more difficult to locate the non-custodial parent.

1. Lives out of state
2. Is not working
3. Is self-employed
4. Works under assumed names or multiple social security numbers
5. Changes jobs often
6. Works for cash

In all cases, the child support specialist will attempt to locate the non-custodial parent by checking federal, state and local sources to find the mailing address, employment or assets of the non-custodial parent. The child support specialist will follow up on information provided on the application form.

How can I obtain a court order for child support and health insurance coverage?

Your child support enforcement office has lawyers who will take your case to court, so you may not need to hire an attorney. Your local child support office will ask the court to order current child support as well as genetic testing costs, medical support and a provision for an immediate income withholding from the non-custodial parents wages.

Can you enforce a separation agreement?

In order for the child support agency to collect child support or enforce an obligation, there must be a court order, signed by a judge. If your agreement has been incorporated into a court order or divorce decree, it can be enforced. Otherwise, your separation agreement may be used as a piece of evidence in requesting the Court to establish a child support order. You may use private legal counsel to enforce the written contractual agreement between you and the other parent.

How do you figure out the amount of child support to be paid?

Maryland uses an income shares model for its child support guidelines. Both parents' incomes are included to calculate the amount of child support required under Maryland law. The guidelines also take into account the cost of health insurance for the child, current child support being paid for other children, alimony being paid, alimony being received, the cost of daycare, extraordinary medical expenses for the children, health insurance premiums and school and transportation expenses for the children.

Each child support award takes into account the incomes of each of the parents, the number of children and specific expenses related to the care of those children. Therefore, it is very likely that two people with the same number of children will have different child support payments.

How are child support payments paid?

If the custodial parent receives TCA, any child support payments collected will be kept by the state as reimbursement for that benefit. If the custodial parent no longer receives Temporary Cash Assistance, the current support as well as any payments made on arrears due will be mailed to the custodial parent. If the custodial parent has never received Temporary Cash Assistance payments, all monies collected will be sent to the custodial parent. Payments will be deposited directly into the bank account, or mailed. Contact the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347 to apply for direct deposit of child support payments.

The other parent is paid “under the table”. Can you attach that money by income withholding?

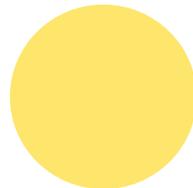
No, that money cannot be attached. The very nature of “under the table” wages means those wages are not subject to payroll taxes or income withholding because the employer is not doing the necessary record keeping or paperwork.

The other parent is self-employed. Can you attach those earnings?

Attaching earnings of a self-employed person requires the cooperation of the self-employed person to arrange for payroll withholding.

How do I change my: name, address, telephone number, and employment information?

The order for support requires that the person paying child support notify the Court within ten (10) days of any change in address or employment. You must also notify your local child support office by contacting the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347, or by notifying your local office in writing. *Please include your nine-digit case number on all correspondence.*



How can I establish paternity for my child?

If you were not married at the time your child was conceived or born, your child support enforcement office will help you establish paternity. Establishing paternity is important for several reasons:

1. It will establish a father-child relationship, enable your child to benefit from that relationship, and strengthen your child's sense of identity
2. It will allow the father's name to be listed on the child's birth certificate
3. It will give the father the right to seek child custody and visitation through a court action and to be consulted about adoption
4. It will give the child the right to important benefits from both parents; such as financial support, inheritance, social security veteran's benefits, life insurance and health insurance
5. It will make it easier for the child to learn the medical histories of both parents and to possibly benefit from medical insurance through a parent's employer, union or military service
6. Paternity must be established before the court can order child support

If the father acknowledges paternity, it is not always necessary to have a court trial. Either parent may apply for paternity establishment without filing for child support. To have an application mailed to you or for further information, contact Customer Care Center at 1-800-332-6347.

Can I request genetic testing?

Yes, either the custodial parent or alleged father may request genetic testing. If there is no child support case you will need to apply for paternity establishment. The child support office will schedule genetic testing which is usually done at the child support office. The cost of genetic testing varies across the state. The average cost of the test is \$120.

What if paternity for the child is denied?

If the person identified as the father denies paternity he can request that genetic testing be performed. The mother, child and the alleged father will be court-ordered to appear for a testing appointment. Currently, this is done by taking a sample from the inside of the cheek on a cotton swab. Blood testing is no longer necessary.

If an Affidavit of Parentage was signed in the hospital at the time the child was born, or if there is already a court order establishing paternity it is very difficult to change. If the child was born during the time the parents were married, the husband is presumed to be the father of the child. You may wish to contact an attorney for legal advice.

Can I get retroactive child support?

No. Child support is established as of the date a complaint is filed with the court, unless good reason is provided for starting the support order at a later date. The Court may give the non-custodial parent credit for any financial contribution made for the children since the filing date of the case.

How do I make payments?

Maryland law requires that all new court orders have support payments made by wage attachment. If you change your job you must notify the child support agency of your new employment information immediately so the income withholding order can be redirected. It is your responsibility to make sure that your payments are made on time.

How long before my employer starts making deductions?

Once your employer receives the income withholding order, he/she is required to make the deduction the first pay period after the receipt of the wage lien. Until you receive a pay stub which shows that your employer has started deducting the child support payment, you are responsible for sending your support payments to the Maryland Child Support Account. You can speed this process by taking a copy of the order you receive at your court hearing to your employer and ask him/her to start making the deductions immediately. You should monitor your account to make sure you are receiving credit for the income withholding payments.

Where should I make my payments?

Payments, in the form of check or money order, should be mailed to the Maryland Child Support Account, P.O. Box 17396, Baltimore, Maryland 21297-1396. Please include your nine digit case number on all payments.

I have a new employer. How can I get my employer to withhold child support from my wages?

You are required to report any change in employment to the agency and to the court within 10 days of any change. You should contact the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347. The agency will issue an administrative earnings withholding order to your new employer. **YOU MUST MAKE THE PAYMENTS YOURSELF UNTIL YOUR NEW EMPLOYER STARTS TO MAKE THE DEDUCTIONS FROM YOUR PAY.**

Send your payments to:

Maryland Child Support Account
Post Office Box 17396
Baltimore, MD 21297-1396

Make sure that you put your nine digit case number on your check or money order. | 11

Can you attach my worker's compensation, unemployment or disability checks?

We can attach other forms of income, including these. You should contact the child support agency as soon as your job status changes to make arrangements for paying your support so that you do not fall behind.

How long am I obligated to pay child support?

Under Maryland law, child support continues until the minor child reaches the age of 18. It may be extended to age 19 if the child is still enrolled in high school. If there is past-due child support, the agency will continue to enforce payment until the arrears are paid in full, regardless of the age of the child.

How do I request an increase/decrease in my child support?

You have the right to request a review for a modification every three years or if there has been a significant change in your circumstances. A substantial and continuing material change in circumstances must have occurred after the last child support order was entered for a change to be made in the support order. Continuing change in circumstances means a material change that occurred at least six months prior and is expected to continue indefinitely into the future. Examples of changes that may be grounds for a modification are: significant changes in income, incarceration, changes in work related day care cost, changes in health care costs, changes in transportation costs for visitation, a change in custody, or a change in the financial needs of the child. Contact the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347 for additional information.

I lost my job (or I got a job making less money). I cannot afford the court-ordered child support. What can I do?

A modification of child support may be appropriate if circumstances have changed substantially since the last order was entered. Send a written statement to your case specialist stating what changes have occurred since the last order for child support was entered and request a review for modification. The specialist will investigate your request to determine whether or not your case meets the agency's guidelines for a modification. If it does, the local office may file a motion for a modification with the Circuit Court. You may also hire an attorney to file a motion for modification, or you may represent yourself and file a motion for modification, submitting the paperwork to your case specialist.

I have been laid off and can't pay my court ordered child support.

What can I do?

If you receive unemployment benefits during the time that you are laid off you need to make sure that your child support is paid. The child support payments can be deducted automatically from your unemployment benefits. If you are not receiving unemployment benefits and cannot find another job promptly you may qualify for a modification of child support. Employment Services are available at your local child support office. Non-custodial parents may be able to participate in this program on a voluntary basis or could be ordered by the court to participate. Contact the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347 for more information about the Non-Custodial Parent Employment Program (NPEP).

I am disabled and I can't work now. Do I still have to pay child support?

Your obligation to pay child support continues until your order is modified by the Court. You should contact your child support specialist and provide him/her with medical information, including reports from your doctor about your ability to work. It may be appropriate for your child support order to be modified temporarily until you are healed and able to return to work. If you are receiving worker's compensation payments or disability payments you must continue to pay your child support.

Does the income of a new spouse or partner count?

If one parent no longer works because they are fully supported by a current partner, the Court may use the income from that parent's previous job to calculate child support. The value of the support received from a current partner can also be considered as income.

My girlfriend/boyfriend/new spouse has a child whom I am supporting. Can I get credit for supporting that child since he/she lives in my household?

You may only receive credit for a child whom you are legally obligated to support. If you have legally adopted the child or you have a court order giving you custody or guardianship, then your support of that child may be considered in calculating child support.

One or both parents have had another child since the last child support order was entered. How will this effect child support?

It will probably not affect the existing child support order. The existing child support order will be considered when setting support for children born later. If either parent requests a modification, the other parent will be given notice and an opportunity to contest the proposed change. The fact that a parent has another child in his/her household to support is not, by itself, justification for deviating from the support amount recommended by the Maryland Child Support Guidelines.

I am living with or married to someone else since my child support order was entered, or the other parent is now living with or married to someone else. Am I entitled to an increase/decrease in child support?

The incomes that are considered for purposes of calculating the recommended amount of child support according to the Maryland Child Support Guidelines are the income of both parents. The income of spouses or boyfriends or girlfriends usually is not considered. However, if one parent lives with a partner who supports or pays bill for him or her, the court may consider that as income for purposes of computing the recommended amount of child support.

My child (or one of my children) turned eighteen (18). How do I get my child support reduced or terminated?

Send a written statement to your case specialist stating the facts of your case. Note that if the child is still enrolled in high school, the obligation to pay child support and medical support continues until she or he turns nineteen (19). If the child support order was established prior to October 1, 2002, and the child is still in high school, the child support order may need to be modified to extend the child support obligation until the child turns nineteen (19).

The child is now living with the other parent. Do I need to notify the Child Support Enforcement Administration?

When custody of the child changes the child support case specialist must be notified in writing about the change, stating who now has custody of the child. A copy of the court order stating that there has been a change in custody or school enrollment information should be provided to show that custody has changed.

The children are now living with me. Can I get my payments stopped immediately?

If you are paying child support and your child now lives with you, send a written statement to your case specialist stating that the child lives with you and begin the process of filing a motion to suspend your child support payment. A copy of the court order stating that there has been a change in custody or school enrollment information should be provided to show that you now have custody. The local office may investigate the matter and ask for additional information to document the change of custody. Any child support payments that are received after the request for a change is made may be placed in escrow and not distributed until the court makes a decision on the modification.

I want to close my case. What should I do?

Contact the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347 for further information.

Whom do I contact if I do not receive child support payments?

Contact the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347 if you are not receiving payments as ordered.



What will happen if the noncustodial parent just won't pay?

If the noncustodial parent does not pay on time, or does not pay in full, your child support enforcement office may:

1. Withhold child support from wages and unemployment benefits, Workers' Compensation claims, etc.
2. Intercept federal and state tax refunds to pay child support arrears
3. Report parents owing past-due support to credit bureaus
4. Refer parents owing past-due support to the Motor Vehicle Administration for driver's license suspension
5. Intercept Maryland lottery winnings to pay child support arrears
6. Garnish accounts at financial institutions
7. Request the suspension or revocation of a professional or recreational license
8. Bring contempt of court actions against that parent
9. Deny the issuance or renewal of a passport
10. Refer cases for federal prosecution when non-custodial parents move to another state to avoid paying child support

Contact the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347 for additional information.

Will the noncustodial parent's tax refund be intercepted?

A noncustodial parent may be certified for State tax offset if the arrears are \$150 or more. Certification for Federal tax offset may occur if arrears are \$500 or more. Certifying a case for tax offset is not a guarantee that a payment will be received.

What if I need to stop payment on a check I submitted?

If you discover that you need to Stop Payment on a Child Support check, you should immediately call customer service at 1-800-332-6347 or visit your local Child Support office. You will receive a Stop Payment form with instructions for submitting it. If you do not report a stop payment you may be held liable for repayment of said transaction.

Why are my payments splitting between my case and the non-custodial parent's second case?

Federal law states that payments received by income withholding must be divided between all of the non-custodial parent's cases. Payments are divided automatically by the Child Support Enforcement Computer System (CSES). Even though the amounts received each month may differ, at the end of the year the custodial parent should receive the total court ordered amount of child support provided payments are made as ordered on a regular and consistent basis.

I have been served with a contempt of court petition and must appear for a hearing. What should I do?

You should appear in Court on the date and time stated in the subpoena. *Failure to appear for a court proceeding may result in a bench warrant or body attachment being issued for your arrest.*

How do I change my court date?

Contact the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347 for assistance.

Can the judge put me in jail if I do not pay my child support on time?

If you have the ability to pay, a judge could find that you are in contempt of court and incarcerate you for failing to obey a court order requiring you to pay child support.

I missed my court date and a bench warrant/body attachment has been issued for my arrest. Can I just turn myself in at the Sheriff's Office?

You can turn yourself in at the Sheriff's Office, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

How do I get someone out of jail when they are there for being behind in their child support payments?

A purge/bond amount is generally set on the warrant. You can contact the court or your local office for payment information.

I have never missed a payment. Why is there a warrant for my arrest?

If you miss a court date a warrant will most likely be issued for your arrest. Even if you are up to date on your current payments there may be other reasons why you were subpoenaed back to court. For example, a modification may have been requested, or there may be an issue of paying medical expenses for your child.

If my support payments are coming out of my check (income withholding) I won't have a warrant issued for me, right?

Not always true. It can take several weeks for income withholding to take effect. If you haven't made any payments on your own your account will be showing an arrearage. You also need to make sure that the correct amount is being deducted from your paycheck and that the deductions are getting to your child support account. You can call the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347 to check on the status of your account. The support payments are your responsibility, not your employer's.

The noncustodial parent was arrested, but has now been released. As the custodial parent, how can I find out how much he/she paid and when will we go back to court?

Contact the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347.

My driver's license is suspended because I got behind on my child support payments. How do I get my license reinstated?

If you fall behind on your child support payments your driver's license will be suspended automatically. Contact the Customer Care Center at 800-332-6347 for more information.

I gave the custodial parent money last month for school clothes. Shouldn't that count against my support?

The court order requires you to pay your support obligation through the child support agency. Any payments you make to the custodian directly or payments you make to someone else on the child's behalf are gifts. These gifts do not count against your support but are merely in addition to the support you owe under the court order.

I have a court order to make an additional monthly payment towards the arrearage and I haven't missed a payment. Why am I receiving notices that my income tax refund will be intercepted and that I will be reported to the credit bureau?

You are doing the right thing by making your payments on time, including a payment toward the arrearage. However, the Child Support Enforcement Administration is required to use all available enforcement tools to collect the arrearage. All child support arrears are due immediately and you are not fully in compliance until your account has a zero balance. Some of the automated processes which may be used to collect the arrears are: federal and state tax refund intercepts, lottery winnings intercept, credit bureau reporting, garnishment of bank accounts, passport denial/suspension, and driver's license suspension. These processes are

triggered automatically. You must pay the arrears in full to avoid these automated enforcement tools.

I missed some payments and now my employer got a new wage withholding notice requiring an additional deduction from my pay for an arrears payment. How can you do this without a court order?

Maryland law allows the Child Support Enforcement Administration to issue administrative wage withholding notices and the agency has the duty to collect any child support arrears. In addition, the law authorizes the agency to determine an arrears payment as long as it is not more than 25percent of the current support obligation. For example, if your regular child support payment is \$400.00 per month, the arrears payment can be as much as \$100 per month.

The custodial parent does not let me see the child. Do I have to pay support?

Regardless of whether you visit the child, the child still needs to be supported. If someone is wrongfully withholding visitation you may be able to file a court case against them. You can contact an attorney to handle your case or you can obtain forms from the Circuit Court Clerk's Office to file a Petition for Contempt (Denial of Visitation) on your own. Obtaining the advice of an attorney is always recommended.



Child Support Glossary

Affidavit of Parentage - A legal document that constitutes a rebuttable presumption of paternity in a paternity proceeding.

Age of Majority - The age at which a person is an adult as a matter of law.

Alleged Father - A person who has been named as the father of a child born out of wedlock but for whom paternity has not been legally established.

Arrearage - Past due, unpaid child support owed by the non-custodial parent. If the parent has arrearages, s/he is said to be "in arrears".

Bench Warrant (BW) - An order of the court that authorizes an arrest; criminal.

Body Attachment (BA) - Court order authorizing arrest; civil code.

Bond - A sum of money paid by the defendant or on his/her behalf to ensure his/her appearance in court.

Centralized Collection Unit - A single, centralized site in each State IV-D agency to which employers send child support payments they have collected for processing. This centralized payment processing site is called the State Disbursement Unit (SDU) and is responsible for collection, distribution, and disbursement of child support payments.

Contempt - Willful defiance of the authority of a court of law.

Court Order - A legally binding edict issued by a court of law. Issued by a magistrate, judge, or properly empowered administrative officer. A court order related to child support can dictate how often, how much, what kind of support a non-custodial parent is to pay, how long he or she is to pay it, and whether an employer must withhold support from their wages.

Current Support - The amount of on-going support that a noncustodial parent is ordered to pay for a child(ren).

Custodial Parent - The mother, father, relative, or other designated individual with whom the child maintains a primary residence.

Delinquent - When an amount equaling or exceeding one month's support ordered amount (SOA) is not paid by the due date. Also known as *past due current amount* or *out of compliance*.

Emancipation - For child support purposes, this represents the point in time when the parents of a child are no longer legally responsible for the financial & medical support of that child.

Enforcement - The use of administrative and/or judicial techniques to convince the non-custodial parent to comply with the court order.

Establishment - The process of proving paternity and/or obtaining a court or administrative order to put a child support obligation in place.

Guidelines - The method for setting child support obligations based on the income of the parents and other factors as determined by state law.

Garnishment - A legal proceeding under which part of a person's wages and/or assets is withheld for payment of a debt. This term is usually used to specify that an income or wage withholding is involuntary.

Genetic Testing - Analysis of inherited factors in human tissue to determine legal fatherhood or paternity.

Income Withholding - Deductions made directly from an individual's income to pay a child support obligation.

Medical Support - Form of child support where medical or dental insurance coverage is paid by the obligated parent. Depending on the court order, medical support can be an NCP's sole financial obligation, or it can be one of several obligations, with child and/or spousal support being the others.

Modification - The process whereby the terms of an existing court order is altered.

Non-Custodial Parent - The parent who does not have primary care, custody, or control of the child, and has an obligation to pay child support. Also referred to as the obligor.

Paternity - To determine the parentage of a child born out of wedlock.

Plaintiff - The individual who initially files the suit.

Pro se - To proceed in one's own behalf, to file paperwork with the Court without representation from an attorney.

Purge Amount - The payment of monies required to reverse an existing finding or satisfy a contempt ruling.

Subpoena - A process issued by a court compelling a witness to appear at a judicial proceeding. Sometimes the process will also direct the witness to bring documentary evidence to the court.

Summons - A notice to a defendant that an action against him or her has been commenced in the court issuing the summons, and that a judgment will be taken against him or her if the complaint is not answered within a certain time.

UIFSA, Uniform Interstate Family Support Act – The law governing the handling of interstate cases.

Wage Withholding - A procedure by which scheduled deductions are automatically made from wages or income to pay a debt, such as child support. Wage withholding often is incorporated into the child support order and may be voluntary or involuntary. The provision dictates that an employer must withhold support from a non-custodial parent's wages and transfer that withholding to the appropriate agency (the Centralized Collection Unit or State Disbursement Unit). Also known as income withholding.

Warrant - A writ issued by a judicial officer commanding a law enforcement office to perform an arrest or search.





Child Support
Questions & Answers

