

Freeze and Seize: Financial Institution Data Match (FIDM)

What is *Financial Institution Data Match (FIDM)*?

FIDM is one method used to collect past due child support. Each quarter, financial institution records are searched electronically to find financial assets of parents who owe past due child support. Any type of financial asset belonging to that parent, such as checking and savings accounts, can be frozen and seized to pay delinquent support.

Is this legal?

Yes. Federal laws 104-93 and 105-200, and Ohio Revised Code sections 3121.74 – 3121.78, section 3121.99 and section 3123.24 – 3123.38 all cover this issue.

Can this happen to anyone?

FIDM is directly attached to the Tax Offset program. Any parent identified for tax offset can have their financial assets reviewed for FIDM or “freeze and seize.”

How does FIDM work?

- Each week, Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) receives and reviews a report of all financial assets of parents whose past due child support meets the tax offset requirements. (For more information see our fact sheet on *Tax Offset*.)
- The parent behind in payments is notified in advance that FIDM and other actions will be taken.
- A request to hold the past due child support amount is sent to the financial institution and a copy is sent to the parent.
- A notice to seize the funds from the account is sent to the financial institution and a copy is sent to the parent.

How can I avoid this?

- Keep your child support current.
- Have the person receiving support waive any past due support. This must be entered

in either the Court of Domestic Relations or Juvenile Court. Any the past due support owed to the State must still be paid.

I believe my financial assets have been frozen and seized in error. Can I fix it?

Here are a few steps to help you:

1. Contact your child support worker, explain your concern and ask for a current payment history. Review your payment history to see if all your payments have been recorded.
2. Gather proof that supports the mistake you believe has been made in your case. For example: receipts for support, cancelled checks, a statement from the other parent that support was paid, adoption records, graduation records, or any certified document you feel support your claim. Check with your worker if you are not sure what records you may need.
3. Call the child support FIDM worker listed on your FIDM paperwork, or call **946-SETS (946-7387)** and ask for your FIDM worker's name and telephone number. Call your FIDM worker and review your case. Most mistakes can be resolved during this phone call or your FIDM worker can explain other actions you make take.

If I believe there is a mistake in my case and I'm scheduled for a hearing, do I have to continue to pay support?

Yes. You must continue to pay support until your case is resolved with CSEA or the court.

If my financial accounts are seized, will they take everything?

The Child Support Enforcement Agency will take all money from any type of financial asset other than a checking account. The Child Support Enforcement Agency will leave a minimum balance in your checking account.