

## Paying Child Support

### Who determines the amount of support I'm ordered to pay?

Any of the following organizations has the authority to determine the amount of support you will pay:

- Child Support Services
- Court of Domestic Relations
- Juvenile Court

### How is the amount of child support calculated?

Child Support Services or the court uses the following information for both you and the other parent in a state-mandated formula:

- Income,
- Certain expenses, and
- Number of dependents

You will receive a copy of the formula with support calculations after the hearing. Formulas are available in the Ohio Revised Code, Section 3113.21.5, in the *Ohio Family Law Handbook* at your local library. Copies are also available from Child Support Services.

### How do I pay my child support?

All child support payments in Ohio are sent to Child Support Payment Central (CSPC) in Columbus. CSPC processes and disburses your payment to your children. You should make your child support payments to CSPC in one of the following ways.

- If you are employed, Child Support Services issues a wage withholding order to your employer. Your employer must deduct support directly from your wages and send it to CSPC within 10 days of your payroll date.
- If you are self-employed, you can have your bank or other financial institution deduct your payments directly from your checking or savings account. The financial institution sends your payment to CSPC. Call your bank for information about financial institution withholding.

- You can pay your child support directly to CSPC by mail. If you pay directly, CSPC sends you a monthly child support statement. Please return the designated portion of the statement with your payment to:

**Ohio Child Support Payment Central  
P.O. Box 182372  
Columbus, OH 43218-2372**

- If you are receiving Workers Compensation, Social Security, or pension or annuity benefits, Child Support Services or the court can issue a withholding to pay your child support.

### Why is my child support payment slightly higher than my court order?

Your payment includes your court-ordered child support plus a two percent administrative fee that Child Support Services is allowed to collect by law. For example, if you are ordered to pay \$100 per week, you will actually pay \$102.

FORMULA:

$$\$100 \times 2\% = \$2 \text{ and } \$100 + \$2 = \$102$$

### What is an arrearage, and how is it calculated?

An arrearage is the amount of child support and administrative fee a non-custodial parent owes but has not paid at any given time.

### When am I in default?

When the amount of child support you owe is equal to one month of support. To learn what one-month of support means in your case, see "Customer Fact Sheet: One Month of Support" (HCJFS 7939).

## How long do I have to pay child support?

- **Past Due Child Support (Arrearage)**  
If you owe back child support, you are responsible for that amount until it is paid.
- **Current Support**  
In most cases, child support ends when your child reaches age 18 and is no longer a full-time student at an accredited high school. Few child support orders extend beyond a child's nineteenth birthday. Some exceptions follow.

### **Child support can continue:**

- For a disabled child who is still dependent, regardless of age.
- Because you still owe an arrearage (delinquent support).

### **Child support must stop if:**

- Your child marries before age 18.
- Your child joins the armed forces.
- Your child becomes self-supporting before age 18.
- Your child comes to live with you and you obtain legal custody.
- You die or your child dies.
- Someone else adopts your child.
- You and the other parent begin or resume living together.

Child support may stop through actions taken by a court on your case. It is the custodial parent's responsibility by law to inform Child Support Services of any of these events.

**However, it is in your best interest to inform Child Support Services as well.** In every case, the court must decide to continue or stop support before Child Support Services can act.

As soon as your child meets one of the conditions listed above, contact Child Support Services and request that the child be emancipated—that is, removed from the child support order. You will need to supply documents that contain the child's name such as:

- a high school diploma
- marriage license
- military enlistment document
- death certificate
- adoption papers

Child Support Services recommends that the court emancipate your child. The court sends the necessary documents to Child Support Services to stop your current support order. Only after completion of this procedure and payment of all arrearage can you legally stop paying support.

## What if I do things for my children over and above what the court ordered?

Child support is basic financial support. You may provide as much as you wish for your children. Just be aware that anything you give directly to the other parent or your child is considered a gift and will not count as child support. You must make regular payments to CSPC for the full amount of child support as ordered. You cannot deduct money or the value of gifts you give the other parent or your children from your child support payment.

## Can my current spouse call regarding my account?

No. Your case is confidential. Child Support Services cannot release information to another party, including your attorney, unless you have signed a release. Your attorney and Child Support Services have forms for this purpose.