

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 Enforcement Agency (CSEA)
- Court of Domestic Relations
- Juvenile Court

How is the amount of child support calculated?

The Child Support Enforcement Agency 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 the Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA).

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, the Child Support Enforcement Agency 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.

**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, the Child Support Enforcement Agency or the court can issue a withholding to pay your child support.

For most people, child support is withheld from their wages. Employers are required to do this by law. But, if you are laid off, self-employed or waiting for your employer to start wage withholding, you should pay by cash, check or credit card.

- **To SEND child support payments by check: (include your SETS case number or court order number)**

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- **To make ONLINE child support payments:**
Access our Online Service Center at: www.hcjfs.org > click on Online Service Center
 - ✓ From bank accounts **ONLY**, go to www.ExpertPay.com (There is currently no charge for payments however, users may pay a nominal fee for payments remitted to other states.)
 - ✓ From MasterCard **ONLY**, go to www.e.childspay.com (There is currently a flat fee of \$11.75 per transaction & it takes up to 14 days.)
 - ✓ From Visa*, Discover*, American Express* or MasterCard*, click on the **Point & Pay** link (on the Online Service Center page of www.hcjfs.org). (See Credit Card Fee chart.)

*Credit Card Fee	
Transaction Amt.	Convenience Fee
\$.01 – \$ 50.00	\$2.00
\$ 50.01 – \$100.00	\$2.95
\$100.01 – \$199.99	\$4.95
\$200.00 – \$299.99	\$6.95
Add \$2 to the convenience fee for each increase of \$100 in transaction amount.	

- **To make child support payments IN PERSON by check, money order or credit card*:**
 - ✓ HCJFS Cashier's Office, 800 Broadway, downtown (Note: Credit card fees also apply to credit card transactions made in person. *)
 - ✓ Monday - Friday: 7 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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 the Child Support Enforcement Agency is allowed to collect by law. For example, if you are ordered to pay \$100 per month, 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 the Child Support Enforcement Agency of any of these events. **However, it is in your best interest to inform the Child Support Enforcement Agency as well.** In every case, the court must decide to continue or stop support before the Child Support Enforcement Agency can act.

As soon as your child meets one of the conditions listed above, contact the Child Support Enforcement Agency 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

The Child Support Enforcement Agency recommends that the court emancipate your child. The court sends the necessary documents to the Child Support Enforcement Agency 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. The Child Support Enforcement Agency cannot release information to another party, including your attorney, unless you have signed a release. Your attorney and the Child Support Enforcement Agency have forms for this purpose.