

Top Ten Things You Need To Know About Child Support

Hamilton County's child support system is here to serve you and your family. Its success depends on you. Child support is required by law and you are likely to be involved in the system for a long time. **It is your responsibility to learn how the system works and to actively participate in your own case.** The following information will get you started:

1. Know your numbers

Keep these numbers in a safe and handy place:

- SETS case number (This is your child support case number, and it always starts with a 7. SETS is the name of our computer system.)
- Court case number (top right corner of every court document)
- Social Security number for each child
- Phone number of your county child support agency. Hamilton County CSEA's phone number is 513-946-7387.

2. Keep us posted

Have you moved? Did you lose or change your job? Have you become disabled? Is your child no longer living with you? Did the other parent move? Did you gain custody of your child? We need to know.

Mistakes happen when the system doesn't have your current information. Don't assume the county child support agency knows about changes that happen in court and vice versa. The Post Office does not tell the child support system your new address and it does not forward child support checks to your new address. Contact the CSEA when you move.

3. The clock is ticking

You start owing child support as soon as the order is signed in court. However, it can take as long as eight weeks before your employer begins deducting support from your wages.

To avoid falling behind, make payments by cash or check to Ohio Child Support Payment Central. You should do this until your employer starts withholding child support from your paycheck. (See How to Pay.)

4. How to pay

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)**

Ohio Child Support Payment Central
PO Box 182372
Columbus, OH 43218-2372

- **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 <http://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: 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

For a print-out of your payment record, call the CSEA or go to the Cashier's Office window at 800 Broadway (*picture I.D. required*).

If problems arise – such as the wrong amount being deducted from your paycheck – call the CSEA.

5. Make child support count

When a judge or magistrate orders a person to pay child support, it must be paid through the child support system. You are certainly free to provide gifts and other extras for your child, but only payments made through the child support system will count toward your support order.

6. What to do if the other parent doesn't pay

There are many actions you and your child support worker can take. Some actions are mild, such as reporting to the Credit Bureau. Some actions are more serious, such as seizing the other parent's bank account. It depends on the problem. Your child support worker can guide you through the process.

7. What to do if I owe and don't pay

You're creating problems and debt for yourself. Your credit rating could be hurt or your driver's license could be suspended - you could even go to jail.

If you have difficulty paying or have lost your job, tell your child support worker. Your worker can guide you through a limited number of options. But remember: you will continue to owe child support. Only an official action of the child support agency or the court could change that.

8. Parenting time (visitation) and child support

These issues seem related, but legally, they are handled separately. The CSEA cannot help with custody or parenting time (visitation) problems. Take those issues to the court that handled your

child support case (either Juvenile Court or the Court of Domestic Relations.)

9. When you will receive your first payment

If the other parent begins paying immediately as required, you should receive a first payment within a few weeks after the court sets the child support order. If you are on public assistance, your child support payments will go to the state.

Remember: you only receive money when the other parent pays, either on his or her own, or through wage deduction.

Payments are processed and posted by the state of Ohio. Once the state receives a payment, it will send payments to your bank account or e-QuickPay® card.

10. Contact Information:

- For 24-hour automated information about an existing case: **1-800-860-2555**
- Questions or problems? Choose any of the following options:
 - Call the CSEA 513-946-7387
 - Fax your question to the appropriate fax number below (include your name, phone number, address, Social Security number, full name of the other parent and your SETS case number)
 - Enforcement/general – 513-946-2396
 - Legal/Admin. Hearings – 513-946-1293
 - Fill out a form online at www.hcjfs.org. Click on *Child Support Help*.
 - Interstate cases: Customer service – (513) 946-SETS (7387)

Addresses:

Hamilton County
Child Support Enforcement Agency
222 E. Central Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Hamilton County Juvenile Court
800 Broadway
Cincinnati, OH 45202
(513) 946-9200

Hamilton County
Court of Domestic Relations
800 Broadway
Cincinnati, OH 45202
(513) 946-9000

For more information:

Visit www.hcjfs.org, click on *Clients* then *Child Support* to locate more Child Support fact sheets.