

California Child Support Services

Child Support Information for the Parent in Jail or Prison

www.childsupport.ca.gov

What if I am served with a Summons and Complaint for child support while in jail or prison?

As soon as you receive the documents, contact the child support agency listed on the paperwork. Contact can be made either by telephone or in writing. You only have 30 days from the date the Summons and Complaint were served (given) to you to respond.

If you don't think you are the child's parent, free genetic testing can be done while you are in jail or prison. The test is quick and painless and the results will be mailed to you. To request genetic testing, contact the child support agency listed on the paperwork.

Will I owe child support while I'm in jail or prison?

Yes. Once an order is in place, you will continue to owe a child support order. Being in jail or prison does not change your obligation to support your children, but the amount due can be lowered until your release. You must act immediately to get your order changed. If you do not pay your child support, interest will be added to the unpaid amount.

How do I get my order changed?

Contact the child support agency enforcing your order. Tell them that you are in jail and need a modification. A modification is a change in the amount of child support you pay. Your caseworker will review your case and help you with the process.

Can I do time instead of paying child support?

No. You can't get credit for child support owed for time served in jail, and you can't do time instead of making child support payments.

How much interest is charged when I don't pay?

By law, California's interest rate is 10% per year and is charged monthly to your balance of unpaid child support.

Will I be able to visit my child after I am released?

Child custody and visitation orders are not handled by California Child Support Services. Every county has a Family Law Facilitator who can guide you through the process or refer you to someone that can help you. Facilitator services are free.

Should I contact the child support agency handling my case when I am released?

Yes. You must let the child support agency handling your case know of any address, employment and income changes.

For more information on child support visit: www.childsupport.ca.gov

Contact California Child Support Services

866.901.3212 – Toll-free (within the U.S.)

TTY – 866.399.4096

Customer Connect

See your case information 24/7!

Gavin Newsom

Governor of State of California

Mark Ghaly

Secretary of California Health and Human Services Agency

David Kilgore

Director of California Child Support Services