

NOTICE OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM

DCSS 0064 (01/03/2022)

Children have the right to be supported by both parents as much as they are able. Child Support is here to work with either parent, or any caregiver of a child who might benefit from these services. There is no income eligibility limit, so services are available to everyone.

Child Support Services are provided to you through people at the Local Child Support Agency (LCSA) who work with the local Superior Court for all Child Support processes. Our goal is to make it easier for you and the children you care about to receive the support they need.

CHILD SUPPORT CAN WORK WITH BOTH PARENTS TO:

- Establish parentage (legal parent relationship);
- Establish and Manage court orders for child, spousal and medical support;
- Review an existing child support order to see if the amount should be changed;
- Collect and distribute support payments and provide consistent accounting of child support owed and paid;
- Pursue enforcement or legal action when necessary to make sure child support is paid in full and on time;
- Or any combination of the above items.

WORKING WITH CHILD SUPPORT

When you open a child support case the LCSA will need you to provide information on yourself, the other parent, and the child(ren) on the case. Depending on what services you request from us, you will also need to fill out forms that may seem long and complicated. If you ever run into problems understanding what we need, just let us know.

Based on the information you provide, the LCSA will work to fill in any gaps and then take the next appropriate action to provide the requested services. If anything changes after your case is open that might affect the child support process, please let us know.

CHANGES YOU NEED TO REPORT TO THE LCSA:

- Any support payments made by the Parent Ordered to Pay Support directly to the Person Ordered to Receive Support;
- If a/the child(ren) on your case moves out of your home;
- If your telephone number, address, employer, or name changes;
- If you start a divorce action, or are changing custody or visitation for the child(ren) on your case;
- The child(ren) enrolls in or stops receiving any private health insurance coverage;
- If you are aware of any of the above changes for the other parent on the case.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Seek legal assistance from a private attorney, legal services office, or through the Superior Court Family Law Facilitator. Please let us know if you hire an attorney to represent you through the Child Support process so that we can update our records. Any costs for legal representation are at your own expense.
- Ask the LCSA to review an existing child support order to see if the amount should be changed. If we are not able to change the support order, you will be given information how to pursue the change through the Superior Court Family Law Facilitator.
- Be informed of all court dates regarding your child support case. Information will most often be provided by mail, so to be sure you have all the facts, please keep us updated on your current mailing address.

- Receive and review copies of documents from your court file unless they are confidential. If the LCSA cannot provide them because they are not stored with us, you will be told how you can request them from the Superior Court.
- You can go to court to enforce your support order, but you must give the LCSA advance notice that you intend to file your own enforcement action. If the LCSA does not respond to your notice within thirty (30) days or if the LCSA tells you that you can proceed, you can then file your own enforcement action with the Superior Court as long as all support is payable through the State Disbursement Unit.

THE LCSA WILL:

- Use all available resources to locate the Parent Ordered to Pay Support and their income or assets, including verifying with the Social Security Administration through data matching.
- Other actions the LCSA may take when necessary:
 - Intercept Federal Income Tax refunds, or other payments from the IRS, of the Parent Ordered to Pay Support. In some situations, these payments are held for 6 months or more before being distributed;
 - Intercept payments from the Federal Government, like retirement, vendor expense reimbursements, or travel payments;
 - Intercept California State Income Tax Refunds, or lottery distributions managed by California Franchise Tax Board.
- Distribute support payments (including child, medical, and spousal support) as listed below:
 - Current Monthly Support/Disregard
 - Past Due Support
 - Interest
 - Future Obligations
- Distribute Disregards to parents who receive cash public assistance; (up to) the first \$100 in payments received will be paid to families with one child or (up to) the first \$200 in payments received will be paid to families with two or more children, and the remaining amount will be applied to government-owed obligations before existing family-owed obligations.
- Provide a monthly statement of the support collected and distributed to the Person Ordered to Receive Support each month. This notice can be provided electronically by email or in paper form by regular mail.
- For any Child Support case where at least \$550 of support has been distributed in the prior year (October 1st - September 30th) a \$35 Annual Service Fee will be automatically deducted from the first support payment distributed the next year. This fee is waived for any family that is or has ever received cash public assistance. Additionally, some other states charge a fee for services. If your case involves one of those states, they may deduct the fee from the support payments, or add it to the balance that is owed.

THE LCSA MUST NOT:

- File a Stipulation that changes current support or arrears owed to you without your approval and signature. This does not include any support that is due while you receive(d) cash public assistance.
- Set a support amount below state guidelines if you receive cash public assistance.
- Provide any services related to Custody or Visitation. Some LCSA's may work directly with their local Family Law Facilitator's office to help customers reach agreements about primary parenting time and child support in one joint meeting.
- Provide legal representation or legal advice to any case participant. The job of the LCSA Attorney is to make sure child support law is followed in managing the child support case. The LCSA and LCSA Attorney are not allowed to be your legal representatives.

CHILD SUPPORT AND PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Families that receive cash public assistance are required to work with the LCSA to obtain child support. Not doing what the LCSA needs may result in a penalty being put on the public assistance case that reduces the amount of cash assistance.

If the parent on the public assistance case has a valid concern for the safety of the family due to child support, the parent may want to claim Good Cause for not working with the LCSA. Any child support owed or accrued while the family receives cash assistance is considered Assigned to the state and is no longer owed to the parent.

MEDICAL SUPPORT

The LCSA is required to make sure children are enrolled in private health insurance benefits if/when they are available at no or reasonable cost through an employer. This starts with making sure every support order includes language regarding which parent, or both, will be expected to provide private health insurance. If necessary, the LCSA will work with the employer of the Parent Ordered to Pay Support to enroll children in affordable health coverage. There is no conflict to being enrolled in both private health insurance and Medi-Cal.

A Medi-Cal applicant/recipient who does not report enrollment in private health insurance can be charged with a misdemeanor. The Person Ordered to Receive Support must report to the CalWORKs eligibility worker and/or child support agency within ten (10) days when private health coverage changes or stops. The Person Ordered to Receive Support must also tell the CalWORKs eligibility worker and/or child support agency about any court order regarding health insurance.

If the Person Ordered to Receive Support is only receiving Medi-Cal, the Person Ordered to Receive Support must cooperate in establishing parentage and obtaining medical support as a condition of continued eligibility for Medi-Cal benefits, unless the Person Ordered to Receive Support has filed and the County Welfare Department has approved a claim of "good cause" (CW 51) Good Cause Claim for Noncooperation. The child(ren) will still be eligible for Medi-Cal. Also, all child support services will be given, unless the Person Ordered to Receive Support tells the LCSA that they do not want services that are unrelated to obtaining medical support and establishing parentage. Obtaining medical support may reduce the amount of the child support received. In cases where both parents are in the home, the LCSA will establish parentage only.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

It is the policy of the State of California to ensure that all individuals are treated equally and that no person shall, on the basis of ethnic group identification, race, color, national origin, political affiliation or belief, religion, sex, age or disability be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of any program or service, or otherwise be subjected to treatment that is different than that provided to others.

Each local child support agency has a designated Civil Rights Coordinator. Any applicant/recipient who feels they have been subjected to discriminatory treatment may file a complaint of discrimination by first contacting the local child support agency's designated Civil Rights Coordinator through the State Customer Service Support Center (CSSC) or by writing to the California Department of Child Support Services, Attn: Human Services Section, Civil Rights Office, P.O. Box 419064, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9064 or call (866) 901-3212.