

## **Avoiding Common Problems with Your Child Support**

### **California Child Support Services**

[www.childsupport.ca.gov](http://www.childsupport.ca.gov)

#### **What happens if you don't pay your court-ordered child support?**

All of the actions below can occur if you don't pay your court-ordered child support on-time and in-full:

- 10% interest per year may be charged on your unpaid balance
- Other income may be intercepted such as, but not limited to:
  - State or federal income tax refunds
  - Unemployment benefits
  - Workers' compensation benefits or State disability benefits
  - Lottery winnings
  - Insurance settlements
- Your driver's license, professional and/or recreational licenses may be suspended
- Liens may be placed on property and bank accounts
- Your passport may be denied
- Unpaid balance may be reported to credit bureaus
- Other legal enforcement actions can be taken

#### **Child support orders**

If you have a court order for child support, provide it to your local agency to receive enforcement assistance. Orders are not automatically enforced. You must contact your local agency and enroll for services. As part of a child support order, an Income Withholding Order will be served on the paying parent's employer. We can help locate employment information of the paying parent.

If you have trouble making payments, talk to your local agency. It is our goal to help all parents succeed with their child support responsibilities.

#### **License suspension**

If your payment is overdue by more than 30 days, a notification is automatically sent to several California licensing agencies and your driver's, professional, and/or recreational (fishing, hunting, etc.) licenses may be suspended.

#### **How do I get my license back?**

If you receive a notification from any California licensing agency, you should immediately contact the child support agency handling your case. We can help you avoid this action or help get your license released.

**We can assist with releasing your license if you:**

- Provide payment information to bring your account current, or
- Make payment arrangements with a child support specialist

Once your child support agency submits a license release, it may take up to 7 business days for the license to be released by the issuing agency if the only reason for the suspension is non-payment of child support.

The faster you contact us, the faster this gets fixed.

**Passport denial**

If your unpaid child support balance reaches \$2,500, the U.S. State Department will not issue you a passport or renew your old one until your balance is paid in full. If you are notified that your passport application is denied, please contact your local child support agency immediately.

**Bank levies, tax intercepts, and other financial actions**

Federal and state law allow for other enforcement actions including intercepting tax refunds, lottery winnings and insurance settlements, and seizing bank assets.

**Credit reporting**

Getting behind on your payments can affect your credit rating. Every payment and/or failure to pay is reported to the major credit reporting agencies.

**Property liens**

A lien will be filed in any county a paying parent may have interest in real property when a child support case is opened.

**Unemployment/disability insurance benefits**

If your only source of income is unemployment or disability, a portion of your benefits may be intercepted to pay your child support.

If your child support order was based on employment income and you are now unemployed or disabled, call the child support agency handling your case and ask about a modification of your support order.

**Help with past-due payments**

There is a program that may help parents resolve certain types of past-due child support debt. The Debt Reduction Program is for parents who owe the government money because welfare benefits were paid for a child living with a relative, a guardian, or in foster care. If you owe a lot of child support debt from when your kids were on cash aid, contact your local agency to find out if you qualify. Money owed to the other parent and not the government is not eligible for reduction.

**What is the Child Support Warning Notice?**

This is a notice sent annually to all parents ordered to pay child support that have a balance of overdue child support, called "arrear." In the notice, you will find

information about how much you owe and some of the options available for paying this debt. Your child support agency can help you with questions about this notice.

Staying on top of your child support information is easy with Customer Connect! Log on to the self-service portal at: [www.cse.ca.gov/CustomerConnect/login](http://www.cse.ca.gov/CustomerConnect/login).

### **California Child Support Services**

[www.childsupport.ca.gov](http://www.childsupport.ca.gov)

866.901.3212

TTY | 866.399.4096

### **Customer Connect**

[www.cse.ca.gov/CustomerConnect/login](http://www.cse.ca.gov/CustomerConnect/login)

See your child support information 24/7!

Gavin Newsom

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State of California

Mark Ghaly

Secretary

California Health and Human Services Agency

David Kilgore

Director

California Child Support Services

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