

Avoiding Common Problems with Your Child Support

California Child Support Services

www.childsupport.ca.gov

What happens if you don't pay your 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. You may also file a motion with the court to ask for a license release.

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.

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.

Passport denial

According to federal law, those who owe \$2,500 or more in past due child support will be denied a passport request by the United States (US) Department of State. The law also says that the US Department of State can revoke an existing passport for the same reason.

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.

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.childsupport.ca.gov/customer-connect.

California Child Support Services
www.childsupport.ca.gov
866.901.3212
TTY | 866.399.4096

Enroll Today!
www.childsupport.ca.gov/enroll

Gavin Newsom
Governor
State of California

Kim Johnson
Secretary
California Health and Human Services Agency

Kristen Erickson-Donadee
Director
California Child Support Services

PUB 306