

## **Child Support Overview**

California Child Support Services

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

### **Who are we?**

California Child Support Services assists in establishing and enforcing financial and medical support orders for children. Services are offered to either parent or any legal guardian or caretaker of children under 18. We provide neutral assistance to help all parties navigate the child support and court processes.

### **What is a child support case?**

A child support case may be opened by either parent and creates a child support order, tracks payments, locates financial assets, and enforces child support obligations. Under federal and state law, parents have a legal duty to provide financial and medical support for their children.

### **We can help with:**

- Establishing new orders for financial support of children
- Establishing medical support orders
- Locating parents
- Establishing legal parentage
- Enforcing new and existing child support orders
- Reducing past due child support debt
- Modifying child support orders
- Processing and tracking payments
- Keeping case records
- Granting access to the online self-service account portal

### **Child support offices do not:**

- Handle custody or visitation matters
- Handle divorces
- Obtain or enforce restraining orders
- Establish spousal support orders

## **10 Steps of the Child Support Process**

If you already have a child support court order and need assistance enforcing that order, we can help. Contact your local child support agency to open a case.

### **Apply for child support services**

Either parent can apply for support or open a child support services case, as can a child's legal guardian.

### **Locate the parents if necessary**

Before a child support order can be made, both parents of the child or children must be located.

### **Summons & Complaint**

The parent being asked to pay will be legally notified that they are named in a child support case.

### **Establish legal parentage**

If named in a case, you have the right to request proof of parentage. We offer free genetic testing.

### **Create a "Stipulated Agreement"**

If both parents can agree on an amount, they can avoid court by filing a "Stipulated Agreement."

### **Court sets the child support order**

A judge or commissioner reviews all the information and decides on a child support amount.

### **Begin making payments**

After a child support order is set, payments are scheduled to begin, usually by payroll deduction.

### **Enforce the child support order**

Parents who refuse to pay or delay paying their child support will face enforcement actions.

### **Change the child support order**

If either party has a change in circumstances after child support is set, they may qualify for "modification."

### **Closing a child support case**

There are many reasons why a child support case can be closed. Visit our website for more information.

Want to learn more Information about the child support process?

Visit the Video Resource Library at: [www.childsupport.ca.gov](http://www.childsupport.ca.gov). Select Forms and Info

### **How to open a case**

Any parent, guardian or caretaker of a child for whom child support is needed is eligible for child support services. There is no income or other eligibility requirement for services.

Individuals currently receiving CalWORKS are automatically referred to their local child support office for services.

If you are not a CalWORKS beneficiary, California charges an annual service fee of \$35.

You can apply online at [www.childsupport.ca.gov](http://www.childsupport.ca.gov) or download and complete the child support services application packet and return it to the closest office. See our website for locations.

### **Local child support offices**

Alameda

Amador/Alpine Calaveras/Tuolumne

Butte  
Colusa  
Contra Costa  
Del Norte  
El Dorado  
Fresno  
Glenn  
Humboldt/Trinity  
Imperial  
Inyo/Mono  
Kern  
Kings  
Lake  
Lassen  
Los Angeles  
Madera  
Marin  
Mariposa/Merced  
Mendocino  
Monterey  
Napa  
Orange  
Placer  
Plumas  
Riverside  
Sacramento  
San Bernardino  
San Diego  
San Francisco  
San Joaquin  
San Luis Obispo  
San Mateo

Santa Barbara  
Santa Clara  
Santa Cruz/San Benito  
Shasta  
Sierra/Nevada  
Siskiyou/Modoc  
Solano  
Sonoma  
Stanislaus  
Sutter  
Tehama  
Tulare  
Ventura  
Yolo  
Yuba

**Resources**

Want more information?

Find it and other resources at: [www.childsupport.ca.gov](http://www.childsupport.ca.gov)

How a Child Support Case Works

Select "Our Agency"

Apply for Child Support Services

Select "Services We Offer"

Make a Payment

Select "Quick Links"

Contact Customer Relations

Select "How To"

Frequently Asked Questions

Select "Forms & Info"

Employers Information

Select "Employers"

For more information on child support visit:

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

Contact California Child Support

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 & Human Services Agency

David Kilgore

Director of California Child Support ServicesCalifornia

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