CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES
P.O. Box 419064, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9064

Reason for this Transmittal

[ ] State Law or Regulation Change
[ ] Federal Law or Regulation Change
[ ] Court Order or Settlement Change
[ ] Clarification requested by One or More Counties
[X] Initiated by DCSS

December 21, 2004

LCSA LETTER: 04-21

ALL IV-D DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: UNIFORM BROCHURES & PUBLICATION STANDARDS

The Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) is proud to release the *Department of Child Support Services Publication Standards,* and nine (9) uniform brochures.

UNIFORM BROCHURES

The uniform brochures will be used statewide to inform customers about child support services. These brochures will ensure that customers are receiving the same information throughout the state.

The brochures were developed by the Publications Workgroup of the Outreach Steering Committee, the Child Support Directors Association, advocacy groups, and DCSS staff. Local child support agencies (LCSAs) should continue to use their existing printed stock of brochures, and begin using the uniform brochures once their stock is depleted. LCSAs may continue to print their own brochures if the topic is not one of the uniform brochures.

The enclosed CD contains the following:

- **Nine (9) PageMaker 7.0 files**
  - Your Guide to Child Support Services
  - Opening a Child Support Case
  - Establishing Paternity (child's father)
  - Information for the Noncustodial Parent
  - Child Support Information for the Parent in Jail or Prison
  - Changing Your Child Support Order
  - Establishing a Child Support Order
  - Child Support: When Parents Live in Different States
  - Child Support Wage Assignments

- **Fonts folder:** Contains all fonts used in the publications.
- **Images folder:** Contains all of the images/graphics used in the publications.
- **PDF folder:** Contains Adobe Acrobat Reader files to be used for in-house printing and display purposes.

You may customize the back panel of the brochure with your LCSA contact information per the DCSS Publication Standards. However, the brochure content and graphic elements **may not** be changed. If you are unable to customize the brochure with your LCSA contact information, please contact Aleecia Macias at aleecia.macias@dcss.ca.gov for further instruction.

The files contained in the Images folder may not be used for any purpose other than the printing and/or reproduction of the uniform brochures, per an agreement with RubberBall Productions (owner of the images). To support the terms of that agreement, we are asking that LCSA Directors review and sign the enclosed agreement. The agreement must be returned by January 28, 2005 to Aleecia Macias by fax at (916) 464-5065 or by mail at:

Aleecia Macias
Department of Child Support Services
P.O. Box 419064, MS 30
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9064

PUBLICATION STANDARDS

The Publication Standards were also developed by the Department of Child Support Services and Outreach Steering Committee's Publications Workgroup to provide a framework for LCSAs that create publications in-house.

It is important that LCSA staff utilize the Publication Standards when developing publications to ensure that brochures are developed consistently.

Please contact Aleecia Macias at (916) 464-2441 if you have any questions, concerns, or issues regarding the publications or publication standards.

Sincerely,

/os/

SANDRA O. POOLE
Deputy Director
Child Support Services Division

cc: Outreach Coordinators

Enclosures

NOTICE

Terms for Use for Photo CD

The Department of Child Support Services has entered into an agreement for use of various digital images contained on the enclosed *Department of Child Support Services Uniform Publications CD (December 2004)*. The agreement allows DCSS to provide these images to local child support agencies (LCSA) for the sole purpose of reproducing authorized California Department of Child Support Services publications.

I understand that the images on the above-mentioned CD are not to be used in any other manner, including but not limited to use in any future LCSA publication, advertising, Internet sites, and printed materials.

Signature	Date
Name (please print)	Local Child Support Agency
Title	

What should I expect?

If your case meets the requirements for review and modification, the local child support agency will review your information and an amount of support will be determined.

You and the other parent will be required to complete forms about income and expenses. Your local child support agency can help you and the other parent work out an agreement for the amount of child support. You can sign a stipulation in the child support office if everyone agrees. However, an agreement between you and the other party that has not been filed in court is not a legal order.

If you can't agree on an amount, you will be served (given) legal papers to appear in court. If you and the other party do not agree to the changes, a judge or commissioner will decide the amount at a court hearing.

The California Department of Child Support Services does not provide legal services to parents or guardians.

Points to Remember

- Parents or caregivers can request a modification (change).
- To request a modification through the local child support agency, you must have an open case.
- A case can be opened at any time.
- Your child support order can go up or down based on information received. The order may not be what you expected.
- There is no charge for requesting a modification through the local child support agency.
- Even if your request is denied, you can still go to court to have a judge decide your order. The Family Law Facilitator can help you do this.

Supporting California's Children

Changing Your Child Support Order

COUNTY
Department of
Child Support Services

What is a Modification?

A modification is an increase or decrease in your court-ordered child support amount.

Who can ask for a modification?

- Noncustodial parents
- Custodial parties (parents, caregivers, etc.)
- Local child support agencies
- Child support agencies from other states

How do I ask for a modification?

You can:

1. Contact your local child support agency.
2. Go to court on your own. The Family Law Facilitator can help you with the process. The Family Law Facilitator provides free legal assistance and is not part of the local child support agency.
3. Hire a private attorney to go to court with you.

When can I ask for a modification?

You can ask for a modification if your circumstances change, such as:

- You are laid off or fired from your job
- You get a new or additional job
- Your income or the other parent's income increases or decreases
- Custody or visitation changes
- Family size changes
- You become disabled
- You go to jail or prison

What do I need to provide?

In order for the local child support agency to review your case for modification, you will need to provide information, such as:

- Income and expenses
- Child care expenses
- Medical insurance
- Disability (SSI, SDI, SSA, etc.)
- Jail or prison
- Unemployment benefits
- Retirement income
- Custody and visitation arrangements

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Kimberly Belshé, Secretary
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Greta Wallace, Director
Department of Child Support Services

1-866-249-0773 (toll free)
www.childsup.ca.gov

PUB 252 (10/21/04)

Is my employer required to follow the wage assignment?

Yes. A wage assignment is a legal document served on your employer. If the employer does not follow it, your employer can be held in contempt of court.

What if my employer is deducting payments but I am not receiving credit?

Your employer has been given instructions for processing wage assignments. Although your employer is required to deduct and send payments on your behalf, you are responsible for making sure that your payments get to the local child support agency in a timely manner.

Check your child support statements and keep your pay stubs to make sure you are receiving proper credit. If there is a problem, contact your local child support agency immediately.

The California Department of Child Support Services does not represent parents or guardians.

How much can be taken from my paycheck?

Generally up to 50% of your net wages can be taken for child support, but in special circumstances, up to 65%. If the total of your support order is more than 50% of your net income, your full support obligation will not be covered.

You are responsible for paying the difference. If your support order is more than 50% of your net income it is possible that you are eligible for a change in your child support order. Ask the local child support agency to review your case.

What if I change jobs?

You must notify the local child support agency every time you change jobs. You must also notify the local child support agency if you become unemployed.

Even if you are not working, you are still required to make payments every month.

Supporting California's Children

Child Support Wage Assignments

COUNTY
Department of
Child Support Services

What is a Wage Assignment?

A wage assignment, also called an *Order/Notice to Withhold Income for Child Support,* requires an employer to make a deduction from a parent's paycheck to pay child, spousal or medical support. The amount of the wage assignment is based on the most recent court order; however, the amount can be increased if the past due support grows.

Why do I have a Wage Assignment?

Federal and state laws require a wage assignment in almost every case where there is a child support order. Wage assignments are ordered, even if payments are currently being made. A wage assignment helps children get their child support on time. Wage assignments can also help you by providing an accurate payment record.

How long will the Wage Assignment last?

Wage assignments continue until there is no longer any child support or arrears owed.

Can I be fired because I have a Wage Assignment?

No. It is against the law for employers to fire employees because they have a wage assignment. If you think this has happened, you may want to speak to an attorney.

Important Points!

- Your employer is allowed to charge up to $1.00 for an administrative fee for each deduction made.
- You have 10 days from the date you receive the wage assignment to dispute the amount owed by filing papers in court.
- Once the local child support agency receives your child support payments, the amount owed to the custodial party is paid within 2 business days.
- Not paying child support is a crime. If you intentionally quit your job to avoid paying child support, you could be held in contempt of court.

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PUB 250 (10/21/04)

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

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 handled by the courts. If visitation is a problem, some Family Law Facilitators can refer you to someone who can help you. The Family Law Facilitator provides free legal assistance for child support issues or you can hire a private attorney.

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

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

Remember!

- Your child support order continues while you are in jail or prison, unless a court changes it. Contact the local child support agency handling your case immediately if you are in jail or prison.
- Changes in your child support order are not automatic and do not go back to the date your income changed, so you need to act quickly.
- Interest is added to the child support you have not paid.

Contact your local child support agency today.

It could save you money.

The California Department of Child Support Services does not provide legal services to parents or guardians.

Supporting California's Children

Child Support Information for the Parent in Jail or Prison

COUNTY
Department of
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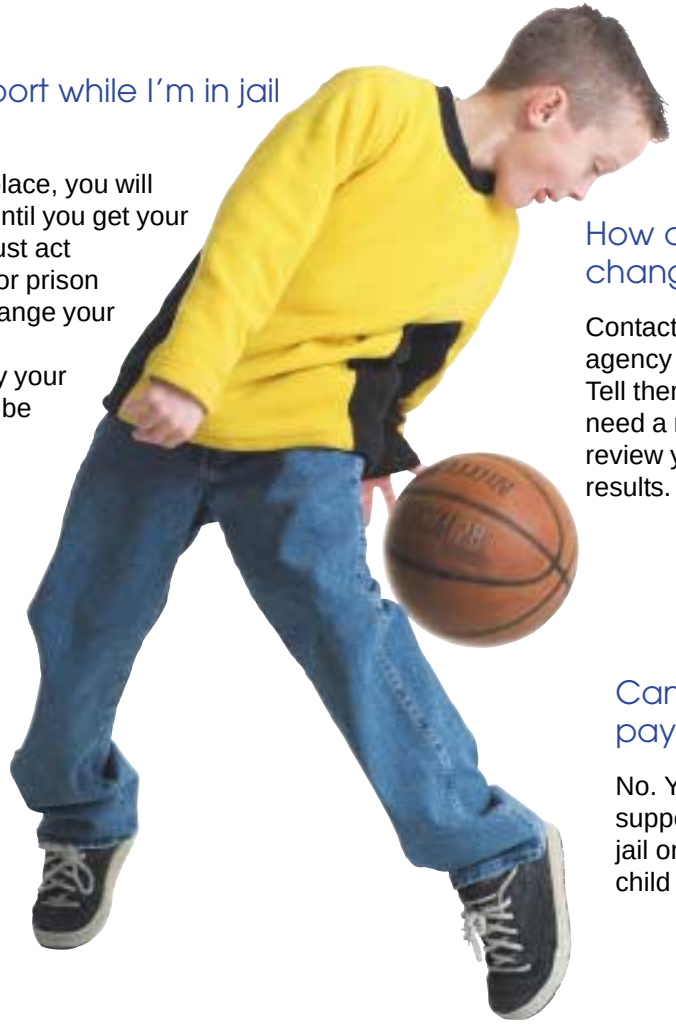
What if I am served with child support papers while in jail or prison?

As soon as you get the papers, contact the local 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 papers were served (given) to respond to the court if you disagree with the papers served on you.

If paternity (child's father) has not been established and you don't think you're the father, free testing can be done while you are in jail or prison. A blood test is not required and testing can be done quickly and painlessly. The results will be mailed to you.

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

Yes. Once an order is in place, you will continue to owe support until you get your order changed, so you must act immediately. Being in jail or prison does not automatically change your obligation to support your children. 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 local child support agency that is enforcing your order. Tell them that you are in jail and need a modification. They will review your case and tell you the results.

What is a modification?

A modification is a change in the amount of child support you pay.

Can I do time instead of paying child support?

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

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PUB 248 (10/21/04)

Will I have to go to the other state?

No, the local child support agency will handle the case for you, but you may be asked to be available by telephone for court hearings.

Are child support laws the same in every state?

Laws and the way support is collected can vary from state to state. The Uniform Interstate Family Support Act helps states work together.

I have an order from one state, but neither of us live in that state. Is this still a good order?

Yes, the child support agency handling your case will enforce the most recent order, no matter where the parties live.

Can I make sure the other parent or caretaker won't have access to my home address and other personal information?

Yes. If you are concerned about the release of personal information, discuss this with your local child support agency to review your options.

Important Points!

- Laws are different from state to state.
- Not all countries have agreements to enforce child support orders from the United States.
- The local child support agency may have to do things differently for out-of-state, active duty military personnel. However, child support can still be collected by your local child support agency.

The California Department of Child Support Services does not provide legal services to parents or guardians.

What other services are available?

- Locate parents
- Provide free or low-cost testing to establish paternity (child's father)
- Intercept tax refunds
- Record liens on real property
- Intercept disability and unemployment benefits

Supporting California's Children

Child Support: When Parents Live in Different States

COUNTY
Department of
Child Support Services

When parents or guardians live in different states or countries, a child support case can be opened at the local child support agency where one of the parents or guardians live. The local child support agency will either establish and enforce the child support order or ask the other state or country for help.

What is UIFSA?

The Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) is a law that tells us how to make and enforce child support obligations when the two parents do not live in the same state or country. Federal law requires states to cooperate with each other to enforce child support orders.

What if I do not have a child support order?

The local child support agency will work with the other state to get an order or ask the other state to collect the payments from the parent in that state, if needed.

What if I already have a child support order?

Bring the order to your local child support agency and it can work with the other state to enforce an order, if needed.

Which state decides the child support amount?

If you do not have an order, the law requires your local child support agency to determine which state sets the child support amount, based on your case.

Can my child support order be changed?

Yes. Your case can be reviewed at the request of either party or the local child support agency. In California, the child support amount can go up or down based on many factors, but mainly the income of both parents and the amount of time he or she spends with the children.

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PUB 251 (10/21/04)

Do not ignore the Summons and Complaint!

What happens if I do not respond?

If you ignore these legal papers you will be considered the legal parent and you may be ordered to pay child support.

If you do not sign an agreement (Stipulation) or file an Answer to Complaint within **30 days**, the proposed judgment will become a **final judgment**, which means a decision is made without your input. This means the amount of support you have to pay may be incorrect.

It is in your best interest to take care of this lawsuit before it becomes a final judgment. The information you provide will help ensure the child support order is correct.

If you are not sure you are the child's father, you must request genetic testing! If you don't request testing you will become the legal father of the child even if you are not the real father. The testing is free and easy and the local child support agency can help you arrange it.

Children need both parents to do better socially and in school.

Points to Remember

- Do not ignore the Summons and Complaint. It does not go away and can change the rest of your life.
- You only have 30 days to respond to the Summons and Complaint from the date you are served.
- If you have any questions about the Summons and Complaint, please contact the local child support agency listed in the paperwork.

We are here to help!

Supporting California's Children

Establishing a Child Support Order

COUNTY
Department of
Child Support Services

When the local child support agency opens a case against you, the first step it takes to establish a child support order is to prepare a Summons and Complaint. A proposed judgment is also prepared to show you the amount of child support you are being asked to pay.

What is a Summons and Complaint?

A Summons and Complaint is a legal document used to establish paternity (child's father), child support and medical support.

What is a Proposed Judgment?

A proposed judgment is what the local child support agency is asking the court to order.

How will I be notified if a Summons and Complaint is filed against me?

You will be served (given) the Summons and Complaint personally, or sometimes someone you know will be served on your behalf. Before serving you the papers, the local child support agency may send you a courtesy letter that informs you of the complaint. The letter tells you that you can pick up the complaint at the child support office rather than being served at your home or workplace.

The California Department of Child Support Services does not provide legal services to parents or guardians.

What should I do after I am served?

You have 30 days to respond from the date you were served. There are several ways to respond. You may:

- File an answer - If you disagree with any part of the proposed judgment you must file an Answer to Complaint with the court within 30 days. The forms are included with the complaint. The Family Law Facilitator can help you prepare an Answer to Complaint. The Family Law Facilitator provides free legal assistance and is not part of the local child support agency.
- Sign a Stipulation - You can contact the child support office named in the Summons and Complaint to sign an agreement (Stipulation) to establish paternity, child support and medical support.
- If you don't think you are the father of the child named in the complaint, contact your local child support agency so you can get free or low-cost testing.
- Hire an attorney - A Summons and Complaint is a legal document. You are being sued. You may want to hire a private attorney to represent you.
- You may ask the Family Law Facilitator for free help in reviewing and completing forms.

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PUB 249 (10/21/04)

Establishing Paternity by Court Order

When a person is named as the father, he will be served with legal paperwork to establish paternity and/or child support and health insurance coverage. This paperwork is called a Summons and Complaint.

The Summons and Complaint will be served on the named father or the person accepting service on his behalf. If the named father knows he is the child's father, he can go to the local child support agency and sign an agreement (Stipulation).

If the person named in the Summons and Complaint thinks he is not the father, then he must file the Answer to Complaint with the court within 30 days of being served. He may contact the local child support agency to arrange for free or low-cost testing to determine if he is the father. Testing does not necessarily require a blood test and can be done quickly and painlessly.

The named father has 30 days to legally respond to the Summons and Complaint or the court will establish him as the father and could order him to pay child support and provide medical coverage for the child.

It is very important for the named father to respond within 30 days so his income and the amount of time he spends with the child can be considered when the court makes decisions on child support.

Now is the Best Time to Establish Paternity!

Parents who support their children early are more likely to continue to support them. Give your baby the best possible chance in life by getting paternity established as soon as possible. Your child will benefit emotionally, financially and medically from your decision.

Once paternity is established, both parents have the right to seek visitation or custody of the child.

The California Department of Child Support Services does not provide legal services to parents or guardians.

Supporting California's Children

Establishing Paternity

(child's father)

COUNTY
Department of
Child Support Services

What is Paternity?

Paternity is a term meaning the legal father of the child. Paternity can be established either by the court or by both parents completing and signing a paternity declaration in the hospital and having it filed with the state.

How is Paternity Established?

Marriage

When a woman is married and becomes pregnant with a child, it is presumed that her husband is the legal father of the child and paternity is established without the parents having to take any legal action.

Declaration of Paternity

The easiest way for unmarried parents to establish paternity is by signing the Paternity Opportunity Program Declaration form (CS 909). It is given to unmarried parents in the hospital when the child is born. Both parents must sign the form for it to be valid. The form CS 909 is also available at the local child support agency, local registrars and courts. The form CS 909 is required if the father is to be named on the birth certificate.

Court Order

Paternity can be established by court order. If either parent has opened a case with the local child support agency, the local child support agency can file all the necessary papers to get a court order.

Why is it Important to Establish Paternity?

The benefits to the child are:

- Legal documentation of his or her parents.
- Father's name will be on the birth certificate.
- Support from both parents.
- Access to family medical history.
- Health insurance coverage, if available.
- The right to inherit from either parent.
- The right to receive Social Security or Veterans' Benefits, if available.
- Knowing who both parents are.

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PUB 244 (10/21/04)

What if I don't think I'm the father?

As soon as you are served with legal papers that claim you are the father of a child, contact the local child support agency handling your case. The local child support agency may be able to help you set up free or low-cost testing. **Do not ignore this document.** If you wait longer than 30 days, the court **will** automatically establish you as the legal father. You may be required to provide medical support and pay child support in an amount set by the court.

What if I don't agree with the amount of child support?

You might be able to change the amount of support you have to pay if you give the local child support agency new information that changes any of the circumstances listed below (see "What should I do now?"). You can also go to court to seek a judge's decision.

What should I do now?

Carefully read and respond to all paperwork sent to you. Contact the local child support agency if you have any questions or concerns. Pay your support in full and on time. You may wish to seek private legal advice. Keep accurate records of payments. This will help if you have a question concerning your case. Let the local child support agency know of any change that could affect your case. These changes may include:

- Custody and visitation
- Income
- Employment
- Worker's compensation
- Disability status
- Address
- Marital status
- Changes to your family size
- Jail or prison
- Child care
- Health insurance coverage

Providing this information may benefit you and could affect the amount you are expected to pay.

What happens if I don't pay?

There are serious things that can happen for not paying court-ordered child support.

- Interest will be charged on your unpaid balance at a rate of 10% per year.
- Your driver license and professional license can be suspended.
- Unpaid child support is reported to credit bureaus.
- Your tax refunds can be taken.
- Liens will be put on your property and bank accounts.
- Your passport can be denied.

Additional enforcement actions can be taken.

The California Department of Child Support Services does not provide legal services to parents or guardians.

Supporting California's Children

Information for the Noncustodial Parent

COUNTY
Department of
Child Support Services

Who are we?

The local child support agency provides services at no cost to parents, guardians and caretakers of minor children, regardless of marital status, income, or if the parents are receiving public assistance.

What we do:

- Locate a parent.
- Establish paternity (child's father).
- Establish, change, and enforce child support orders.
- Establish, change, and enforce an order for health insurance coverage.
- Collect and distribute child and spousal support payments.

Financial support and parental involvement determines what a child has in life, what that child can do, and who that child will become.

Who is the noncustodial parent?

A noncustodial parent is the parent without primary physical custody of his or her children. The Department of Child Support Services recognizes that this term may cause concern when a noncustodial parent is actively involved, personally and financially, in his or her child's life. This term is used to distinguish the person who pays child support from the person who receives it.

Why do I have a case?

A case is opened for any parent, caretaker or guardian who requests our services. By law, if the child(ren) receives public assistance, a case is opened automatically.

What should I expect?

You will be served (given) legal papers concerning your case. The Family Law Facilitator provides free legal assistance and is not part of the local child support agency. The facilitator can help you if you have questions about the paperwork. If you do not think you are the father of the child, the local child support agency can get you free or low-cost testing to determine if you are the father. Once paternity is established, a child support order will be obtained.

The amount of child support is set using state guidelines that consider each parent's income and other information like the amount of time each parent spends with the child. Special needs of the child are also considered.

You may be required to pay child support through the local child support agency handling your case as long as the case is open. Your employer will be required to withhold child support payments from your paychecks.

Do I have to go to court?

You have the right to have your case heard in court. However, you may be able to settle your case out of court by meeting with someone at the local child support agency.

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PUB 247 (10/21/04)

Opening a Child Support Case

The local child support agency provides services at no cost to parents, guardians and caretakers of minor children. Our services are available regardless of marital status or income.

There are two types of cases: non-public assistance and public assistance.

Non-Public Assistance Cases:

We will open a case when you complete an application for services. You can get an application from our office.

Public Assistance Cases:

If you are receiving public assistance, we will open a case when we receive a referral from the county welfare department that is providing assistance. When the custodial party is receiving public assistance, the first $50 of child support collected each month goes to the custodial party and the rest is used to pay back public assistance.

When a child is removed from the home, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, and placed in foster care, a child support case may be opened and one or both parents may be required to pay child support to help in the cost of foster care.

When a minor child is receiving Medi-Cal only, a case is opened to establish paternity and medical support. A child support order will also be established if requested by the parent.

Correct Information Will Help Process Your Case

Please provide as much of the following information as possible about you, your minor child(ren) and the other parent.

- Full legal names and any other names used
- Dates of birth
- Birth certificates
- Marriage certificates
- Social Security numbers
- Addresses
- Employment information, including employment history
- Income and assets (property, cars, boats)
- Child support payment records
- Copies of all existing court orders (temporary or final), including child support orders, legal divorce documents, visitation orders, restraining orders, and any other orders involving your children.

You Can Help!

The more complete information you provide, the faster you will see results.

Supporting California's Children

Opening a Child Support Case

COUNTY
Department of
Child Support Services

What You Can Expect Once Your Case is Opened

Once your case is opened, we will follow up on the information you have given us. The local child support agency will send you a letter with your case information within two weeks of opening the case.

Locate the Other Parent

If you don't know the other parent's address, we will try to obtain it. Any information you can give us to help find the other parent, like current or past jobs, addresses and earnings, will be helpful.

Establish Paternity

The local child support agency can help you establish paternity with a Paternity Opportunity Program Declaration or a court order. The Declaration is a form you can fill out that must be signed by both parents to establish paternity without going to court. The local child support agency will help you get free or low-cost testing when the child's father is in question.

Obtain a Child Support Order

Legal action will be taken to get child support from the noncustodial parent. The amount of child support is determined by the income of each parent and the amount of time each parent spends with the child, among other issues.

Enforce the Child Support Order

The local child support agency has a number of ways to collect child support for children. The most common way is by withholding part of the noncustodial parent's wages from his or her paycheck.

Interstate Cases

Child support orders can be obtained and enforced even when the other parent lives in another state.

The California Department of Child Support Services does not provide legal services to parents or guardians.

Contact us if there is a change, for you or the other party, in any of the following:

- Address
- Employment
- Custody/visitation
- Public assistance
- Court orders

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PUB 246 (10/21/04)

Seeking Health Insurance Coverage

Your children have a right to health insurance coverage. We will work to make sure your children get the health insurance coverage they need if it is available at no cost or reasonable cost.

Cooperating With Other States

Child support orders can be obtained and enforced, even when the other parent lives in another state.

We Can Help!

The local child support agency offers free services to parents and guardians to help them meet their responsibilities to their children.

Referrals

If you need assistance in any of the following areas, we will provide you with referrals:

- Visitation or child custody issues
- Domestic violence
- Restraining orders
- Child abuse

Types of Services We Provide:

- Locate a parent
- Establish paternity
- Establish, modify, and enforce a court order for child support.
- Establish, modify, and enforce an order for health insurance coverage.
- Collect and distribute child and spousal support payments.

The California Department of Child Support Services does not represent parents or guardians.

Supporting California's Children

Your Guide to Child Support Services

COUNTY
Department of
Child Support Services

Locating Parents

If you don't know where the noncustodial parent is located, the local child support agency will try to find the parent to establish paternity (child's father) and/or establish, change, or enforce orders for child support.

Establishing Paternity

The local child support agency can help you establish paternity with a Paternity Opportunity Program Declaration or a court order. The Declaration is a form you can fill out that must be signed by both parents to establish paternity without going to court. The local child support agency will help you get free or low-cost testing when the child's father is in question.

Establishing Child Support Orders

Once paternity is established, we can help you get a child support order based on each parent's income, visitation, and other information. Most orders will also include a wage assignment so money will be withheld from the noncustodial parent's paycheck to pay child support.

In certain situations, we can help you get a change in your court ordered child support, which is called a "modification."

Enforcing Child Support Orders

The local child support agency has several ways to collect child support for your children, including:

- Withholding wages from paychecks
- Interception of:
  - State or federal income tax refunds
  - Unemployment benefits
  - Workers' compensation benefits
  - State disability benefits
  - Lottery winnings
- Bank levies (attaching bank accounts)
- License suspensions
- Levies on property
- Passport denials

Some of these actions are required by law. Others will be used depending on the facts of each case.

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor
State of California
Kimberly Belshé, Secretary
California Health and Human Services Agency
Greta Wallace, Director
Department of Child Support Services

1-866-249-0773 (toll free)
www.childsup.ca.gov

PUB 245 (10/21/04)

California Department of Child Support Services

Publication Standards

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor
State of California
Kimberly Belshé, Secretary
Health and Human Services Agency
Greta Wallace, Director
California Department of Child Support Services

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Department of Child Support Services Publications Standards

I. PURPOSE

The following standards were developed to promote uniformity in child support services publications throughout the State of California. Please use these standards in the development of new child support services publications as well as in efforts to revise current publications that were previously developed by local child support agencies (LCSAs).

II. IDENTITY STANDARDS

LOGO

LCSAs will use the Child Support Program logo and/or slogan on printed matter and electronic media materials – including brochures, newsletters, flyers, Power Point Presentations, invitations, training materials, Web sites and advertisements. However, county standards or regulations regarding logo use must be followed. LCSAs may use the logo on stationary, but it is not required. The logo will not be used on legal forms.

Use of the logo will be phased in as materials are ordered or reordered through the normal course of business. Current inventory of all printed matter supplies will be used before ordering new supplies utilizing the Child Support Program logo.

Please read the Logo Style Guide contained in Appendix XXX for complete details regarding correct usage of the DCSS logo.

Reproduction quality copies and digital images of the logo will be provided to LCSAs on CD. Additional copies may be obtained through the Office of Public Affairs (916) 464-5188 or by e-mailing: lynn.cavanaugh@dcss.ca.gov.

Any questions on usage should be directed to the Office of Public Affairs (916) 464-5188.

STATE SEAL

The California State Seal must be inserted on all statewide publications. The seal should be no smaller than 0.4” x 0.4” in standard publications such as brochures, flyers, and posters. The colors of the seal cannot be altered, although the grayscale image or the 4-color image can be used.

Note: Publications with the California State Seal must be approved by DCSS, the Health and Human Services Agency and the Governor’s Office.

Black & White State Seal

4-Color State Seal

GOVERNMENT CREDITS

Every statewide publication must contain credit information. Typically, this information is located on the back panel or page of a multiple-page publication, or at the bottom center of single-page publication.

Example:

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor
State of California
Kimberly Belshé, Secretary
Health and Human Services Agency
Greta Wallace, Director
Department of Child Support Services

II. IDENTITY STANDARDS (CON'T.)

GRIPPER EDGE

The gripper edge of a document is the outside border of a publication where no printing will be allowed. Please set a 1/4" gripper edge on all publications.

WORD USAGE

Terms used in publications should be consistent with the Glossary of Child Support Terms, an Office of Child Support Enforcement document. The following is the web address for the glossary: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/fct/glossary.htm

Please note the following terms as examples of appropriate usage:

- Noncustodial parent (instead of absent parent or non-custodial parent)
- Local child support agency
- Custodial party (instead of custodial parent)
- Child support services program (instead of child support program)

LITERACY LEVEL

All publications targeted for the general public should be written at a 5th grade reading level. This determination was made after extensive research and analysis by the DCSS Forms Section.

GRAPHICS

Photos should include people that represent California's diverse population, especially children. In addition, they should include positive images of parents with children, whenever possible.

Graphic files (used in statewide publications) can be obtained from a representative of the DCSS Outreach Team in original or PDF format.

ADDITIONAL STYLE GUIDELINES

- Include DCSS publication number and revision date on every publication.
  Format as shown: PUB XXX (MM/YY)
- All publications will contain information about where customers can obtain translation services and/or child support information in specified languages.
- Indication that services are free of charge.
- Ensure that your publications reflects a professional style that is representative of the California Child Support Program.

2-FOLD BROCHURES/PAMPHLETS (SIX PANELS)

Headline

Minimum 12 pt
For style purposes, it is suggested that a larger line space should be left before a headline and a smaller line space after a headline so the text is easily identified by the appropriate headline.

Body Text

Minimum 8 pt

Government Credits

Minimum 8 pt

Language Accessibility Text

Minimum 8 pt
1 pt. stroked text frame, same color as the headlines of that brochure.

Slogan/phrase (inside panels, bottom-center)

May vary in size.

II. IDENTITY STANDARDS (CON'T.)

CONTACT INFORMATION

There is a blank area on the back panel of the statewide publications for LCSA contact information. Please enter the LCSA's information in the order listed below.

1. LCSA Name
   Minimum 12 pt
   No space between name and physical address

2. Physical Address
   (as shown below, no space after agency name)
   County or Region Name Department of Child Support Services
   123 Your Street, Suite 321
   Your Town, CA 98765

3. Mailing or Payment Address
   (if space permits, add after physical address)

4. Phone Number
   (format as shown below)
   XXX-XXX-XXXX

5. Toll-Free Phone Number
   (format as shown below)
   XXX-XXX-XXXX

6. Website address, email address, TDD line, if applicable.

PRINTING STANDARDS

Paper stock

Matte Gloss, 40 – 80 lb.

INK COLORS

Pantone uncoated, 4-color process
Black & White printing is also acceptable.

COUNTY LOGO

May be placed on the front panel if space permits.

III. RECOMMENDED PUBLICATIONS

The following is a list of core brochures that the DCSS recommends for LCSAs to print, display, and distribute as needed:

1. Your Guide to Child Support Services (General Brochure)*
2. Opening a Child Support Case*
3. Establishing Paternity (child's father)*
4. Information for the Noncustodial Parent*
5. Child Support Information for the Parent in Jail or Prison*
6. Changing your Child Support Order*
7. Child Support: When Parents Live in Different States*
8. Establishing a Child Support Order*
9. Child Support Wage Assignments*
10. Enforcement
11. SLMS
12. Customer Service
13. Medical Insurance
14. Intercepts
15. Employers and Non IV-D Parents
16. TANF
17. Welfare to Work
18. Outreach 800 numbers
19. Interest

* These brochures are completed.

Not all brochures are required. However, if a LCSA wishes to print a brochure on any of the above listed subjects, the LCSA is to use the approved statewide publication.

NOTE: In order to maintain uniformity and consistency throughout California, state approved brochures are not to be modified, except to update LCSA contact information, unless prior approval is obtained. Suggestions for revisions will be considered for incorporation during the annual evaluation process. Please send suggestions to the DCSS Outreach Team.

IV. DEVELOPING LOCAL CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY OR REGIONAL PRINTED MATERIALS

Educational materials other than those provided by DCSS might include the following items:

- Brochures/handbooks **not** provided by DCSS
- Flyers
- Invitations
- Advertisements
- Newsletters
- Videotapes
- Cable television PSAs
- Educational items

Brochures and Handbooks developed by LCSAs shall use the same guidelines as state-approved brochures.

The graphic design specifications for brochures do not apply to other types of documents. However, all materials should observe literacy and grade level guidelines, unless they are prepared for a specific audience, such as a group of attorneys.

MATERIALS APPROVAL PROCESS

LCSAs are asked to continue to submit locally generated materials (posters, flyers, banners, print advertisements, PowerPoint Presentations, etc.) for review by the DCSS Outreach Team prior to printing, when time constraints permit. A review of these types of materials will be done primarily to check for inaccuracies in text, or pictures or language that could be considered inappropriate to any of the child support services program stakeholders.

REVISIONS AND NEW MATERIALS

All new and updated outreach printed materials shall be submitted to the DCSS Outreach Team in order to maintain the DCSS library, which allows LCSA Outreach Coordinators to have full access to materials used by other LCSAs.

New graphic files can be e-mailed, or hardcopy samples can be mailed to:

Attn: Outreach Team
California Department of Child Support Services
P.O. Box 419064, MS 30
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9064

When notifying DCSS of new materials, the submission forms in the appendix should be used.

V. APPROVAL PROCESS

Approval can be obtained by sending a PDF version of a proposed new publication to the DCSS Outreach Team. DCSS will review the material for adherence to guidelines and return it within three (3) working days to the person who submitted it with a response.