



# Child Support Services



## **Parent Handbook**

*Information for Parents  
Who Receive Support*



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## What is Kansas Child Support Services?

Kansas Child Support Services (CSS) is dedicated to improving the lives of families throughout Kansas by ensuring consistent and stable financial support for Kansas children at no cost, regardless of income. Our mission is to empower families – offering the guidance and resources needed for a child’s future.

CSS offers many services at no cost, regardless of income. These services include:

- ✦ Locating parents
- ✦ Establishing parentage
- ✦ Setting up child support orders
- ✦ Modifying existing orders
- ✦ Collecting and distributing payments

Parents and caregivers can enroll for CSS at any time to request these services. You do not need to be receiving other benefits or services from the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) to take advantage of what we offer through CSS. More importantly, Kansas CSS is committed to helping families without any associated costs or fees. We never charge a fee from you or the child support you receive, putting more money in your pocket throughout your child support journey.

We are here to answer any questions regarding your child support case. Contact CSS for updates or to provide new information.

### Kansas Child Support Services

☎ (888) 757-2445

✉ [DCF.CSSCustomer@ks.gov](mailto:DCF.CSSCustomer@ks.gov)

🌐 [ChildSupport.dcf.ks.gov](http://ChildSupport.dcf.ks.gov)



# Our No-Cost Services

## Locate Parents

Before a child support order can be established, both parents of the child must be located. CSS can assist in locating parents living in or outside of Kansas. It is important to provide as much information about the other party as possible, as this can be beneficial when attempting to locate noncustodial parents.

## Establish Parentage

Legal responsibility for minor children must be determined if it has not already been completed. If a child's parents were not married at the time the child was born, it may be necessary to establish parentage through genetic testing or court order.

Once parentage is legally established, a child gains many rights and privileges, including the right to child support. Other rights may include rights to inheritance, rights to the parent's medical and life insurance benefits, and to Social Security and Veteran's benefits.

## Acknowledgment of Paternity

Unmarried parents have the option of signing a form called an *Acknowledgment of Paternity*. This is a legal document that is typically signed in the hospital after the child's birth. In Kansas, you are legally presumed to be the parent if you signed an *Acknowledgment of Paternity* for the child. If an individual signed this form and now has reason to believe they are not the biological parent, legal action must be taken to remove that person as the parent. CSS suggests seeking the advice of an attorney in this scenario.

## Genetic/DNA Testing

If there is a question about paternity and an *Acknowledgment of Paternity* form was not signed, the court may order genetic testing. CSS will assist in scheduling the mother, child, and possible father for testing at no cost. DNA is collected from the inside of the

mouth, and the samples are sent to a laboratory for comparison. Once all parties have been tested, it typically takes six to eight weeks to receive the results.

The State of Kansas covers the cost of initial genetic testing. If one party disputes the test results, that party would then be responsible for the cost of any additional testing.

## **Establish Support Orders**

Once legal responsibility for the minor child is determined, an order for financial and medical support may be pursued. CSS completes an assessment of the case, compiles necessary documents, and schedules a hearing.

## **Determining Child Support Amounts**

CSS uses the Kansas Child Support Guidelines established by the Kansas Supreme Court to consider the circumstances of those who pay and those who receive payment to calculate a fair amount for child support. A judge will review the information and order a monthly amount to be paid.

*The Kansas Supreme Court Child Support Guidelines may be found at <https://kscourts.gov/About-the-Courts/Programs/Child-Support-Guidelines>.*

## **Modify Existing Support Orders**

As life changes, so should the child support order. Every three years, parties can request CSS review their case for modification. Child support orders may also be reviewed due to a change in circumstances, such as the age of child or out-of-pocket health insurance costs.

An increase or reduction in child support amounts is not guaranteed, and this process may take several months to be completed. A modification packet can be requested by contacting CSS.

## **Collect and Distribute Payments**

Once the court order has been established, CSS monitors the order to ensure payments are made regularly and in the correct amount.

The primary method of paying child support orders is through an Income Withholding Order (IWO). An IWO is sent to the employer of the parent ordered to pay support, and an automatic payroll deduction for child support is set up.

If a parent ordered to pay support is unemployed or self-employed, Kansas Child Support Services uses other tools to collect child support payments.

All support payments, including voluntary child support payments, must be submitted through our payment processing center, the Kansas Payment Center (KPC).

### **Kansas Payment Center**

KPC provides a reliable, centralized system that tracks and records all payments to keep accurate information and make clear what was paid and when. A child support payment will not be credited until it has been received by KPC. CSS tracks all child support balances and payments for all parties.

Parents receiving child support in Kansas can easily access their child support funds through KPC. Parents are provided a U.S. Bank ReliaCard® Visa Prepaid Debit Card or can choose to have their funds directly deposited into a checking or savings account.

KPC is available 24 hours a day. Parents can check their payment history by calling KPC or visiting their website for information.



**1-877-572-5722**  
**kspaycenter.com**

## Current Support

If a child support order is in place, any payments received will be applied to the amount due for the current month's child support. If the child(ren) is not receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and is not in the custody of the State of Kansas or the Kansas Department of Corrections, the entire amount of the current support payment collected will be sent to the custodial parent. The monthly support amount is owed to the party who has custody of the child the first day of the month.

## Arrears (Past Due Support)

Once a child support order is established, the support continues to accrue even if the other party is incarcerated or not making payments. This past due support is referred to as child support arrears. Parents who owe support are legally required by the court order to continue making child support payments until the arrears are paid off.

If arrears are owed to the custodial parent as well as the State of Kansas, any child support payment received will be sent to the custodial parent until all arrears have been paid. Any additional payments of past due support will be kept by DCF. There may be some circumstances where this does not apply. If you have questions regarding arrears support payments on your child support case, contact CSS at 1-888-757-2445.

## Enforcement of Support Orders

Under federal and state law, parents have a legal duty to provide financial and medical support for their children. Once a child support order is in place, child support continues to be owed until it is paid in full.

## Enforcement Actions

An order for child support does not guarantee that child support will be paid each month; therefore, CSS continuously monitors and reports non-paying individuals for administrative actions.



CSS offers the following resources to help children receive the support they need.

- ✦ Issuance of Income Withholding Orders
- ✦ Collection of Federal and Kansas Tax Refunds
- ✦ Collection of Unemployment Insurance Benefits
- ✦ Attaching Personal Injury and Worker's Compensation Claims
- ✦ Property Liens and Intercept of Tax Foreclosures
- ✦ Bank Garnishments
- ✦ Intercept of Gambling Winnings
- ✦ Restriction of Driver's License
- ✦ Restriction of Professional Licenses
- ✦ Restriction of Licenses through Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks
- ✦ Passport Denial
- ✦ Consumer Credit Bureau Reporting

Kansas children are  
***our priority.***



## Enhanced Privacy

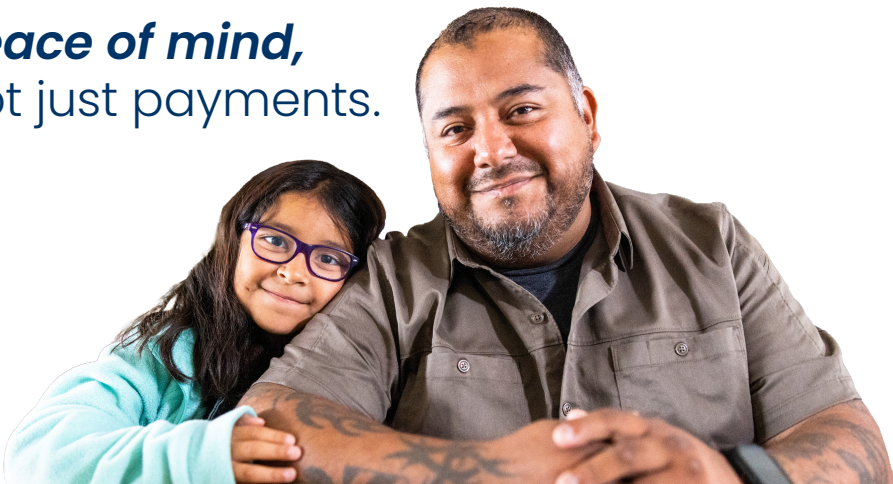
Kansas Child Support Services prioritizes the safety of potential victims of domestic violence or child abuse. In certain situations, CSS activates a Family Violence Indicator (FVI) on the child support case, which adds special safeguards to that individual's electronic record, limiting access and enhancing privacy. Our policy is designed to protect families by an additional layer of security and keeping their location confidential when the FVI is active.

An FVI is established under the following circumstances:

- ✦ An active Protection from Abuse Order (PFA)
- ✦ A determination is made by DCF Economic and Employment Services that there is good cause for the client to not cooperate with CSS
- ✦ Potential risk of physical or emotional harm to the child or custodial parent is reported and CSS determines there is risk of safety after careful review

Ensuring the safety of Kansas families remains our top priority. If evidence later suggests the FVI may no longer be needed, CSS will contact the family by mail to allow them to provide information to keep the indicator in place. If no response is received, the FVI will be removed.

***Peace of mind,  
not just payments.***



## Non-Cooperation



### Important Note

This is not a CSS benefit or service.

Cooperation ***is required*** for continuation of services.

**Non-cooperation is defined as the failure to provide CSS with required documents and information.** CSS will be prevented from acting on behalf of the custodial parent if they are in non-cooperation. It is important to stay in contact with CSS and provide updates and requested information as necessary.

There are times when a custodial parent is required to participate with CSS to continue receiving benefits such as food assistance, child care assistance, TANF, or medical assistance. In those situations, failing to provide requested information to CSS may lead to a non-cooperation penalty and jeopardize the continued eligibility for those benefits.

Penalties for non-cooperation will be enforced as follows:

- ✦ **First Penalty:** Ineligibility for TANF and/or child care assistance for a minimum of three months. To restore eligibility for these benefits, the custodial parent must cooperate with CSS and submit a new application for benefits.
- ✦ **Second Penalty:** Ineligibility for TANF and/or child care assistance for a minimum of six months. The custodial parent must comply with CSS Requirements and reapply to regain eligibility.
- ✦ **Third Penalty:** Ineligibility for TANF and/or child care assistance for a minimum of one year. Cooperation with CSS and reapplication are required to reinstate eligibility.
- ✦ **Fourth or Subsequent Penalty:** A 10-year period of ineligibility for TANF and/or child care assistance.

For additional details regarding non-cooperation penalties, please contact Child Support Services at 1-888-757-2445.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Communication with CSS

#### *Who do I contact if my phone number or address has changed?*

It is important to let Kansas CSS know if there is a change to your contact information. Please call 1-888-757-2445 to report any updates.

#### *Do I have to respond to CSS if I don't agree with the information I have received?*

Prompt communication with CSS is important. If you receive paperwork or other information from CSS, a response is typically required. Failure to provide CSS with required documents and information may result in a non-cooperation penalty. This may affect eligibility for benefits such as TANF, food, child care, or medical assistance. CSS will also be prevented from acting on behalf of the custodial parent.

If you have a change in your circumstances or disagree with the information you receive, contact CSS at 1-888-757-2445 to discuss your situation.

### Custody and Parental Rights

#### *Can CSS help me get custody or shared parenting time?*

No. CSS is unable to assist with parenting time, visitation, or custody matters.

#### *Does my child's other parent have to pay child support if we are still together?*

If you are living in the same household as the parent who owes child support for your child(ren), please notify CSS at 1-888-757-2445. This may affect the circumstances of your child support case.

When both parents are not living in the same household, the responsibility to provide for the child(ren) often falls on the parent who lives with the child(ren). These parents may rely on government assistance for necessary services, such as food, child care, TANF, or medical assistance.

In these circumstances, CSS is required to pursue a child support order. Failure to cooperate with CSS may jeopardize the continued eligibility for those benefits.

## **Incarcerated Parents**

### ***Does my child's other parent still owe child support even if they are incarcerated?***

Yes. Once a child support order is established, the support continues to accrue, even if the parent who owes support is incarcerated and not making child support payments. This past due support is referred to as child support arrears. Parents who owe support are obligated by the court order until arrears are paid off.

If a parent who owes support is incarcerated in a Kansas Department of Corrections facility and works in a private industry or is on work release in Kansas, CSS is required by federal law to issue an IWO to Kansas Department of Corrections facilities for current child support payments and any arrears owed. CSS cannot issue IWOs for those incarcerated in federal facilities. Federal inmates can make voluntary payments through the Kansas Payment Center to avoid falling behind on their child support obligations.

If you become aware that the parent who owes support is incarcerated by the Kansas Department of Corrections, please notify CSS at 1-888-757-2445.

### ***Are there any services available to help me get a job so I can pay my child support?***

If a paying parent is receiving benefit assistance such as food assistance from DCF, they may be eligible for services to help them find and keep a job. Contact (888) 369-4777 for more information.

KansasWorks is another service to help job seekers find employment and training opportunities.

Visit [www.kansasworks.com](http://www.kansasworks.com) for more information.

## **Additional Resources**

Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF)

*[ChildSupport.dcf.ks.gov](http://ChildSupport.dcf.ks.gov)*

Federal Office of Child Support Services (OCSS)

*[www.acf.hhs.gov/css](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/css)*

Kansas Judicial Branch Child Support Guidelines

*<https://kscourts.gov/About-the-Courts/Programs/Child-Support-Guidelines>*

Kansas Legal Services (KLS)

*[www.kansaslegalservices.org/topics/123/child-support](http://www.kansaslegalservices.org/topics/123/child-support)*







# Connect with Us




## Easily Apply for Child Support Services Online

 [cssapply.dcf.ks.gov](https://cssapply.dcf.ks.gov)



## Contact Us or Visit Us Online

 [childsupport.dcf.ks.gov](https://childsupport.dcf.ks.gov)

 1-888-757-2445

## Connect With Us on Social Media



@kansasdcf



@kansasdcf



@dcfkansas



Kansas Department for  
Children and Families



*Kansas CSS is committed to helping families without any associated costs or fees.*