FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM

Overview 2026

Information provided for FFY 2024-25

VISION

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

WORKING WITH FAMILIES AND PARTNERS TO HELP CHILDREN RECEIVE THE CHILD SUPPORT THEY NEED AND DESERVE

MISSION

- SERVE CUSTOMERS WITH RESPECT, CONCERN AND PROFESSIONALISM
- MAKE IT EASIER FOR PARENTS TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO THEIR CHILDREN
- WORK WITH PARENTS, PARTNERS AND THE COMMUNITY TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE THE CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM

SERVICES

- Families receive child support services through our Program, private attorneys or by filing pro se actions.
- We work with many different partners. The following all play a part in successfully providing child support services to families:
  - The Federal government
  - Florida's courts
  - Local law enforcement
  - Financial institutions
  - Employers
  - Other state agencies

SERVICES

FAMILIES

- Request our services by signing up online.
- Are automatically referred to us if a parent receives cash or food assistance.

There is no cost to request our services.

SERVICES

We provide services to over

823,520 cases

involving over

789,031 minor children

82.5%

of families

with a case

have a **support order**

SERVICES

We work with families and partners to:

- Locate parents, employers, assets.
- Establish paternity.
- Establish and modify child support orders.
- Receive and distribute child support payments.
- Monitor and take action to help parents comply with child support orders.

SERVICES

REQUESTING CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

The Child Support Program receives requests for services three different ways, depending on whether a parent receives public assistance and if the parents live in the same state or country. The provided services depend on whether paternity is established and if there is a child support order.

Not all parents receive child support services from the Child Support Program. When the Program is not involved, these cases are referred to as private cases. Parents can be represented by an attorney or represent themselves in a private case.

- **SERVICE REQUEST METHOD**
- **PARENTS WITH A SUPPORT ORDER**
- **PARENTS WITHOUT A SUPPORT ORDER**
- **PARENTS LIVING IN DIFFERENT STATES AND COUNTRIES**
- **STOPPING CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM SERVICES**

SERVICES

SERVICE REQUEST METHODS

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (DCF) REFERRALS

DCF automatically refers parents who receive cash and/or food assistance to the Program for child support services. Parents receiving only Medicaid must apply. Parents must cooperate with the Program as a condition of receiving assistance.

PARENT APPLICATION

Any parent can request services by completing an application. Applications are completed online and collect critical information about the parents and children.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REFERRALS

Child Support agencies in other states and countries request services for parents and children who do not live in Florida.

SERVICES

PARENTS WITH A SUPPORT ORDER

Parents who have a support order from a divorce or other action can receive services from the Child Support Program.

In these cases, the private child support case becomes a Title IV-D case, and different state and federal laws dictate what services can be provided and payments must be made to the State Disbursement Unit.

The parent's existing support obligation is entered on the Child Support Program's computer system to enforce the order and process payments.

Parents can request support order modification if circumstances have changed.

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PARENTS WITHOUT A SUPPORT ORDER

Paternity must be established before support can be ordered. The Program uses genetic testing to determine the biological father.

The Program establishes support orders through both administrative and judicial processes. The Program decides which process to use based on case and legal requirements.

Before paternity or a support order can be established, the parent who may be ordered to pay support must be served with legal notice and given the opportunity to respond.

SERVICES

PARENTS LIVING IN DIFFERENT STATES AND COUNTRIES

If the parent who owes support lives in another state or country, the Program may ask that state or country to assist in establishing paternity or establishing and enforcing the support order.

SERVICES

STOPPING CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM SERVICES

Parents who are not receiving cash assistance, food assistance, or Medicaid can ask the Child Support Program to stop providing child support services at any time. The Child Support Program also may stop providing services under certain conditions.

When the Child Support Program stops providing services, the case is considered a private child support case. The state and federal laws and required reporting when the Program was providing services no longer apply to the case.

SERVICES

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ESTABLISHING A CHILD SUPPORT ORDER

The first step in a child support case is establishing a support order. We work with families and partners to help children get the support they need and deserve.

A child support order sets the amount of support a parent is required to pay. The order can also establish paternity, and require health insurance and payment of medical expenses. Support orders can be changed as the circumstances of the parents and child change.

Orders are established and changed administratively and by going to court. Other child support agencies may be involved when one parent lives in another state or country.

- **ADMINISTRATIVE**
- **COURT**
- **PATERNITY**
- **ORDER MODIFICATION**

SERVICES

ADMINISTRATIVE ESTABLISHMENT

- The Child Support Program establishes paternity and child support obligations administratively.
- Orders established through this process have the same force and effect as a court order.
- An administrative action starts by serving a notice on the parent who owes or may owe support. Genetic testing is used when paternity needs to be established. We ask both parents for financial and other information needed to determine the child support amount.
- Based on the information provided by the parents and the Florida Child Support Guidelines, we calculate the amount of child support to be ordered and mail both parents a proposed order.
- Parents can agree to the proposed order, provide additional information, meet with us or request a hearing.
- A final support order that includes an income deduction order is issued and filed with the Clerk of Court. The order is mailed to the parents with instructions on how to make payments.

SERVICES

COURT

- The Child Support Program partners with public and private attorneys and the Clerks of Court to establish court orders for paternity and child support.
- A court action begins when the Program's attorney files a petition in circuit court and it is served on the parent who owes or may owe support. Information provided by the parents is used to calculate the amount of child support to be ordered under the Florida Child Support Guidelines.
- A hearing is held, and the court issues a support order that includes an order requiring the parent's employer to deduct child support payments automatically from the parent's income. The order provides the parents with instructions on how to pay their child support.

SERVICES

PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT

- Children with unmarried parents need to have paternity established before support can be ordered.
- Establishing paternity identifies a child's legal father.
- Florida allows parents to establish paternity voluntarily at the hospital when the child is born or any time after leaving the hospital by signing a voluntary acknowledgment of paternity.
- If paternity is not acknowledged, it is established administratively or by going to court. We use genetic testing to determine who is the biological father.
- The final step in establishing paternity is updating the child's birth certificate with the father's name at the Bureau of Vital Statistics.

SERVICES

ORDER MODIFICATION

- A child support order may need to be changed to reflect the current circumstances of the parents and child.
- Either parent can ask us to review their support order or they can try to modify the order themselves if circumstances have changed.
- The Child Support Program collects information on the change of circumstances and financial information from the parents to determine if the Program should attempt to modify the order.
- Orders are modified administratively and by going to court.

SERVICES

WORKING WITH PARENTS & PARTNERS TO ENSURE PAYMENT

Once a child support order is established, we work with families and partners to help children get the support they need and deserve.

Program partners include parents, employers, financial institutions, the IRS, other state and local agencies and the courts all with a goal of receiving timely payments. The Child Support Program uses many methods to assist in this effort. State and federal laws apply to how and when certain methods can be used. We also involve other state child support agencies when one parent lives in another state

- PAYMENT AGREEMENT
- WAGE WITHHOLDING
- SUSPENSION ACTIONS
- COURT ACTIONS
- LIENS
- OTHER COLLECTION METHODS
- BANK ACCOUNTS
- CREDIT REPORTING
- MEDICAL SUPPORT
- COSTS

SERVICES

PAYMENT AGREEMENT

The Child Support Program can negotiate terms for payment of past-due support to help a parent avoid enforcement actions. The parent who owes support may enter into a payment agreement. Past-due support is still owed, but can be paid off over time.

WAGE WITHHOLDING

Payroll deduction is the best way to pay and collect child support. When the Program issues a wage withholding notice, the employer makes timely and consistent payments for the employee. More than half of all child support collections come from wage withholding.

SERVICES

SUSPENSION ACTIONS

Before suspending a license or denying renewal of a U.S. passport, the parent receives written notice. If the parent does not pay, reach agreement to pay or contest the action, the parent's license may be suspended, or passport not renewed. Licenses that can be suspended include driver licenses, professional licenses, hunting or fishing licenses.

COURT ACTIONS

The Child Support Program court action to collect in some cases. Outcomes vary depending on each case, but can include full or partial payment of past-due support, or contempt of court.

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LIENS

To collect past-due support, the Child Support Program can file liens on vehicles, boats, personal watercrafts, mobile homes and real estate.

OTHER COLLECTION METHODS

The Child Support Program can collect money from insurance settlements, IRS tax refunds, unclaimed property, lottery winnings, reemployment assistance and workers' compensation benefits.

SERVICES

BANK ACCOUNTS

The Child Support Program can collect past-due support from banks and other financial institutions.

CREDIT REPORTING

Like other creditors, the Child Support Program reports past-due amounts to credit reporting agencies.

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MEDICAL SUPPORT

The Child Support Program can take action to enroll child(ren) in health insurance or to collect a child's medical expenses that are not covered by insurance.

COSTS

The Child Support Program can collect costs that are owed from a legal action and that are past-due by 30 days.

COLLECTIONS

Over $1.5 billion
in child support
disbursed in FFY 2024-25

98.5%
went to families

Remaining 1.3%
reimbursed public
assistance dollars

Over $1.0 billion
collected through income withholding
from the parent's paycheck

CASE PROCESSING OPTIONS

eServices
Access your case 24/7
Upload forms and documents

Chat
Chat with us

Email
Use our online contact form 24/7

Fax
Send information by fax

Phone
Get payment or case information by phone

COST EFFECTIVENESS

For every **$1.00** spent...

...the child support program disbursed **$4.17** in FFY 2024-25