

Who receives the money from support payments?

If the family has never received public assistance benefits, all support payments go to the family.

If the family is receiving public assistance benefits, all support payments go to the state. (Unpaid amounts for this period are due the state even after the family goes off assistance.) If the state receives more in support payments than what it has paid to the family in total benefits, the state pays the family the difference.

If the family is not currently receiving temporary assistance benefits but received them in the past, the current month's support goes to the family. If there is money left, it goes to either the family or the state: if past-due support is owed to the family, the family gets its share first. The state gets its share only after the family receives its past-due support.

NOTE: Under federal law, if money is owed to the state and if the state takes a non-custodial parent's federal income tax refund, the state gets its share of the refund first.

What happens when a parent doesn't pay child support?

When a parent does not meet the child support obligation, the Friend of the Court office works to enforce the support order. Below is a list of some enforcement methods.

Consumer (Credit Bureau) reporting

The Friend of the Court must report to a consumer reporting agency (credit bureau) the arrearage amount for each payer with two or more months of support arrearage. Lenders will often obtain a credit report from a consumer reporting agency when deciding whether to extend credit. If the credit report shows a history of untimely support payments or a large arrearage, the report may result in a denial of a loan or other credit.

New hire reporting

Employers must report basic information about all their newly hired employees to the Michigan New Hire Reporting Center. Each state's child support computer system receives data provided through new hire reporting. The child support office staff use the information to locate non-custodial parents and to establish or modify child support orders.

Driver license suspension

Driver licenses may be suspended for non-custodial parents who:

- Are at least two months behind in paying their child support obligations.
- Are not in compliance with a payment plan.

Before a driver license is suspended, the non-custodial parent is notified in writing. The parent can avoid a license suspension by showing that there is a mistake regarding the amount of the arrearage or by entering into an agreement accepted by the court for the payment of the arrearage.

Occupational license suspension

Non-custodial parents who are working in occupations that require a license from state, county, or municipal board or agency (e.g., electricians, realtors, barbers, plumbers) may have their licenses suspended if they:

- Are at least two months behind in paying their child support obligations.
- Are not in compliance with a payment plan.

Non-custodial parents receive notice of a pending suspension and can request a hearing before the license is suspended.

Passport denial

Passport applications may be denied if non-custodial parents:

- Are at least \$2,500 past due in their child support obligations.
- Are not in compliance with a payment plan.

The U.S. State Department reviews passport applications to see if past due child support is owed.