Minnesota child support agencies help children get the support they deserve by working with parents, employers, government agencies and other states. Child support agencies have unique access to some information and resources.

Before you apply for services, or before you close your child support case, make sure you understand the child support services available to you.

**Inexpensive**

By taking advantage of services through your child support agency, you will save time and avoid court costs for many routine child support activities.

There are some fees that may be charged for these services.

- When you apply for services, you agree to pay a two percent cost recovery fee on your payments or on your obligations.

- Some enforcement activities involve fees.

Families who receive public assistance may not have to pay these fees. Ask your county worker which of these fees apply to you.

In addition, federal law requires the Minnesota Department of Human Services to collect an annual fee of $25 in cases where:

- The person entitled to support has never received assistance under a state program funded under Title IV-A of the Social Security Act

- The department has collected at least $500 of support.

If both conditions are met, the department will deduct the fee from support collected on behalf of the person entitled to support, but not from the first $500 collected.

You may choose to apply for Income Withholding-only (IV-D) Services from the child support agency for child support or spousal maintenance. The agency charges the obligor $15 per month for Income Withholding-only (IV-D) Services.
Comprehensive
Child support agencies help from beginning to end – from getting a court order to collecting support until your obligation is paid in full. Child support services include:

- Locating parents
- Arranging genetic testing
- Bringing actions to determine parentage
- Establishing court orders for basic support, medical support and child care support
- Reviewing and asking the court to modify orders for support
- Administratively adjusting court orders based on the cost-of-living index
- Withdrawing child support payments automatically when authorized
- Working with other states when one parent does not live in Minnesota
- Billing parents
- Monitoring payment agreements
- Collecting, processing and recording payments
- Depositing child support directly into checking, savings and stored value card accounts
- Maintaining a case history, including a payment record
- Transferring health insurance and dental insurance information to and from parents
- Providing parents secure access to payment and case information online and by telephone

- Charging interest on child support arrears and debt when appropriate
- Enforcing court orders for basic support, medical support, child care support and related spousal maintenance including:
  - Suspending driver’s licenses
  - Suspending occupational licenses
  - Denying hunting, fishing and other recreational licenses
  - Reporting information to credit bureaus
  - Filing liens
  - Filing motions for contempt of court for nonpayment of child support.

State and federal laws make certain powerful enforcement actions available to you only through your county child support agency. These activities may include:

- State and federal tax refund intercepts
- Data matching with financial institutions to find and levy funds
- Obligor grant holds
- Income withholding by employers and other payors of funds
- Collection of unpaid support from lottery winnings
- New hire reporting by employers
- Obligor passport denials.
Helpful

Child support agencies help children get the financial support they deserve by establishing a financial partnership between parents. If your family receives public assistance, the child support agency will automatically help you. Otherwise you may choose to apply for child support services. If you apply, you have access to some unique services and resources. If you choose not to apply for services, or if you close your child support case, you must:

■ Work directly with your child’s other parent

■ Collect or pay child support without income withholding

■ Enforce your order without exclusive resources and enforcement activities, such as tax intercepts, passport denials and levies from financial institution data matches

■ Give up easy access to payment and case information online and by telephone.

For more information about Minnesota’s child support services, go online at mn.gov/dhs and search for child support. For up-to-the-minute payment and case information available 24 hours a day, visit Minnesota Child Support Online at www.childsupport.dhs.state.mn.us. Please contact your county child support agency with additional questions.
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