



# Wisconsin Child Support Program Reference Guide

Visit us at: [dcf.wisconsin.gov](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov)

The Child Support Program in Wisconsin is providing this information to help you understand the child support process. Sign up at [dcf.wisconsin.gov/bcs/](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/bcs/) for your secure password and track your payments on Child Support Online Services.

## Important Items

- Both Parents are required to report changes of address, income, health insurance, and employment.
- If you send in a payment, always include a coupon with your name, and your PIN number or Case Number.
- Missed payments increase debt. Interest is charged monthly on the past-due amount.
  - **Failure to pay your child support** will result in enforcement action, including the following: a lien placed on all your real and personal property, suspension of your driver's, hunting, or fishing licenses, tax intercept, credit bureau reporting, and other measures that may result in jail time or criminal charges.
  - Always keep in contact with the child support agency to avoid enforcement actions.

## Child Support Court Orders

Only a judge or court commissioner can set or change your child support order. The court order can include support payment amounts, health insurance orders, and orders to pay other costs or fees. Paternity orders may include repayment of birth expenses, and genetic test costs. Income withholding is automatically ordered.

After the order is signed by a judge or court commissioner, the original is filed with the county Clerk of Court's office. A copy is given to the Child Support Agency and to each parent and their attorneys. The payment amounts, health insurance order, and other court ordered obligations are entered into the statewide child support computer system called KIDS. KIDS keeps track of child support payments, and any unpaid balances.

A PIN (personal identification number) is assigned to each person in a case. A IV-D number (also known as a KIDS case number) is also assigned to every case. Both the PIN and IV-D number are used by the Child Support Agency to identify you and your case.

If a parent's income or the child(ren)'s living arrangements change, the child support order can be changed by a judge or court commissioner. The child support amount might increase or decrease. To change an order, a stipulation (legal agreement) or court order has to be written, reviewed by the Child Support Agency, and then approved by the judge or court commissioner. There may be a filing fee to change your order. Contact your Child Support Agency for more information.

## Income Withholding

State law requires withholding child support payments from paychecks. Income withholding is also used to collect past-due support, other expenses, or fees from the payer. Income withholding applies to any income including commission, unemployment benefits, workers compensation, and social security and pension benefits. Income withholding is not allowed on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or W2 cash benefits.

The employer receives a copy of the income withholding order that tells them to withhold the court ordered amount from each paycheck. Most employers pay their employees every week or every two weeks. Employers deduct the support from the wages based upon the employer's payroll schedule. The amount withheld from a pay check could be different than the amount ordered by the court, because of a difference in payroll frequency, but the total amount withheld should be equal to the total amount ordered by the court and due for a year. The total withheld amount from each paycheck cannot exceed 50% to 65% of the employee's disposable income, depending upon the payer's circumstances.

## Making Payments

Wisconsin law does not allow payments to be made directly to the other parent and you may not be given credit for direct payments! **Payers are responsible for making payments on their own any time payments are not deducted from their paycheck.** You may use the payment coupon included in this packet to make your first payment.

All Wisconsin child support payments are sent to the Wisconsin Support Collections Trust Fund (WI SCTF). All payments must be sent in with a coupon. You must contact your local agency if you do not have a coupon to make a payment or print a coupon on-line at: [dcf.wisconsin.gov](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov)

### Mail your payments with coupon to the following address:

WI SCTF  
Box 74200  
Milwaukee, WI 53274-0200

## Receiving Payments

Wisconsin makes all child support payments either through Direct Deposit into your checking/savings account, or through a Debit Card. If you do not apply for Direct Deposit, your child support will be automatically “loaded” onto the Debit Card account. You may use the Debit Card for purchases, cash back or for cash withdrawal at ATM’s. If you prefer Direct Deposit, which is the most frequently used payment method, you may use the application included in this packet. You may check payments on-line at: [childsupport.wisconsin.gov](http://childsupport.wisconsin.gov).

**Debit Card Users**  
If you move, call the number on the back of your card to update your address. The Post Office cannot forward replacement cards to new addresses.

### How long does it take to get an income withholding payment?

You need to **allow 30 days** for support payments to start coming from employers. Here’s how it works:

- All child support payments must be paid through income withholding.
- The child support agency sends an income withholding notice to the employer within **2 business days** of a new court order or after the reported change in employment.
- The employer must start withholding support in the first pay period after receipt of the withholding notice.
- After the payment is withheld from the paycheck, the employer must send the payment to the Wisconsin Support Collection Trust Fund within **5 days** from the paycheck date.
- The payment is processed on the same day that it is received at the Support Collections Trust Fund. The payment is disbursed to the payee overnight, and takes another **2 business days** before the payment is on the debit card or in the payee’s savings/checking account (direct deposit).
- Once support payments start, payments should continue based on the employer’s payroll cycle.

## Fees and Deductions

**The Paying Parent:** Employers are permitted to deduct up to \$3 for every withholding. This fee covers their processing costs. The paying parent is also charged a yearly fee, each January, to cover processing costs, called the receipt & disbursing (R&D) fee. The fee is set by the state legislature (§767.57(e)(a) Wis. Stats.) and is currently \$65. You may use the attached coupon to make the first child support payment and R&D fee.

**The Receiving Parent:** According to federal law, some parents receiving child support payments will be charged a \$25 fee each year. The fee is withheld after \$500 in support is sent to them. Parents currently receiving or who have ever received AFDC, W2 cash benefits, or kinship care assistance will **not** be charged the fee. If you received these benefits in another state, you must notify the Child Support Agency where your court order was entered.

## Reporting Changes

State law requires both parents to inform the child support agency **within 10 days** when there is a change in address, employment, health insurance, or a substantial change in income. To report these changes, call the child support agency phone number at the end of the enclosed pamphlet or find us on-line at [dcf.wisconsin.gov](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov). A change in income will **not** automatically change your court order. Only a judge or court commissioner can change the amount of your support order.

## The Child Support Agency Role

The child support agency has an important role in establishing and enforcing a child support court order. It is important to stay in contact with them throughout the life of your case. As your children grow and time passes, circumstances may change and your child support agency can answer most of your questions or direct you to the next appropriate step. It is important to report changes immediately to avoid additional enforcement action. However, **only the court can change your court order**, so if you believe your child support should be changed, a motion must be filed.

Child support agency services **do not include** custody and placement changes. Only the court has the authority and responsibility for these types of issues. There are forms online at [dcf.wisconsin.gov](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov) to use in these circumstances.

## First Payment Coupon

Mail this coupon along with your check or money order (payable to **WI SCTF**) for your first child support payment(s) and your annual R&D fee. Be sure to write your KIDS PIN number on your check or money order. You and your employer may receive billing coupons for future payments that are due. Mail this coupon and payment to the address listed in the Making Payments section above.

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### First Payment(s) Coupon

**F**

Court Case Number

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Name

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Social Security Number

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KIDS PIN

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Child Support paid for this period

\$

\*Annual Receipt and Disbursement (R&D) fee

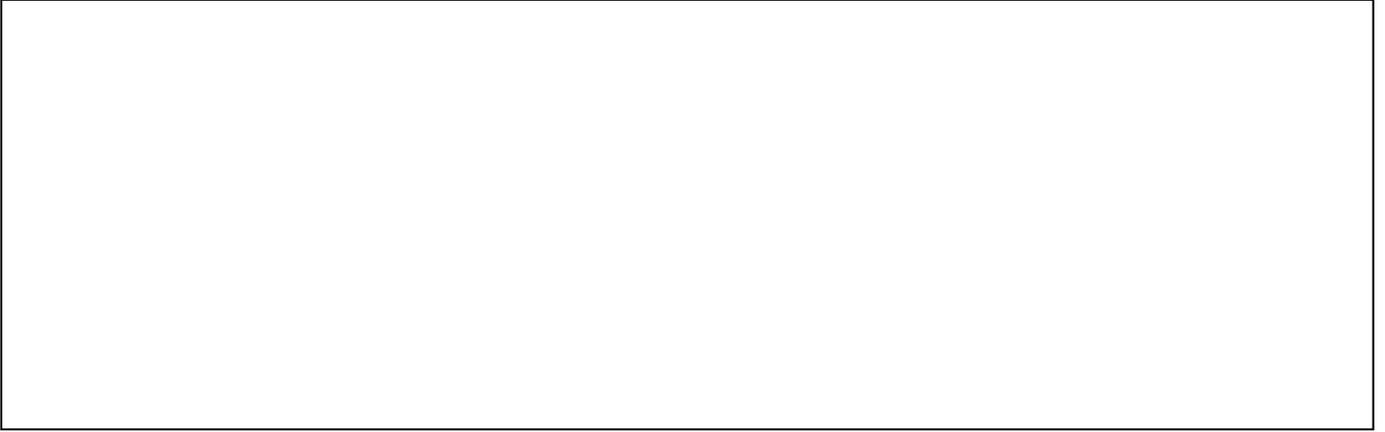
\$ 65.00 \*

Total Amount Enclosed

\$

This payment will be applied to the court case listed above. \*Include with first payment only. This is an annual fee.

**For More Information:**



DCF is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need to access this information in an alternate format, or need it translated to another language, please call (608) 266-9909 or (800) 947-3529 TTY (Toll Free). For civil rights questions, call (608) 422-6889 or Wisconsin Relay Service (WRS) - 711.