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Child Support Application Process

1. How do you receive child support?

To receive child support, you must complete the Complaint for Support. This is the first step in creating a support case with the Domestic Relations Section.

2. How to complete the Complaint for Support?

To start the child support process, you must complete the Complaint for Support

You may print the form online at www.childsupport.state.pa.us

Or you may complete the form in person by visiting your local domestic relations office.

An appointment may be necessary to complete the application with a Domestic Relations representative.

3. What information is needed to complete the Complaint for Support?

You will need the following information to file the Complaint for Support. This information is essential in helping the Domestic Relations representative process your Complaint for Support. Insufficient or inaccurate information may cause a delay in receiving support. Be truthful and cooperative in order to avoid any potential delays

Information needed:

- parents' names
- parents' addresses
- parents' and child(ren)'s social security numbers
- parents' employment information (current and last known)
- photograph of obligor
- medical insurance information
- financial and real estate assets
- birth certificate(s) of child(ren)
- marriage license
- attorney names
- prior court orders and divorce decrees

Click here to print the [List of Items](#).

4. When is the Complaint for Support effective?

The Complaint for Support is effective the date the completed form is received by the Domestic Relations office.

5. What are arrears?

Arrears is any delinquent money that is owed through child support.

6. What are retroactive arrears?

Arrears or money owed through child support that will begin to accumulate between the filing date of Complaint for Support and the date of the support conference.

7. What criteria do you need to file for child support?

You must meet one of the following criteria:

- 1.) A parent caring for the child or children.
- 2.) A person caring for the child or children
- 3.) A public or private agency caring for the child or children.

8. How soon should the Complaint for Support be completed?

Prompt filing of the Complaint for Support will protect your legal rights for support and any arrears or money owed through child support. Please note: Filing child support does not protect any legal rights other than those involved with child support.

9. Are children allowed to attend the meeting for the Complaint for Support application?

It is recommended not to bring your children as a courtesy to other clients and to expedite the Complaint for Support application process.

Support Conference Meeting

1. How do I know when to attend the Support Conference meeting?

The Order of Court to appear for the conference will provide the date, time and location to participate in the meeting.

2. Who may attend the Support Conference meeting?

The Support Conference meeting can only be held with the plaintiff, defendant and attorneys; no children, boyfriends, friends or other people may participate.

3. What happens when there is a Protection from Abuse order in place for one of the parents?

If a Protection From Abuse (PFA) order is in place for one of the parents, the plaintiff listed in the PFA must alert the Conference Officer in advance of the meeting.

4. What happens when the parties are out of town, in the armed forces or incarcerated?

If one of the parties is out of town or in the armed forces, they may participate via phone for this conference. This notice must be provided to the Conference Officer well in advance of the meeting. A support order may not be established on an incarcerated defendant though the Domestic Relations Section may contact the person to determine paternity.

5. What information is needed for the Conference Summary meeting?

- A true copy of your most recent Federal Income Tax Return, including W-2's as filed
- Pay statements for the preceding six months
- Income and expense Statements
- Verification of child care expenses
- Proof of medical coverage
- Information relating to Professional Licenses

6. What happens if the information is missing for the meeting?

The parties have a reasonable amount of time to provide any missing information to the Conference Officer before the recommendation will be processed.

Appeal Process

1. Who may complete the paperwork to request an appeal hearing of the interim support order?

Either party may appear at the Domestic Relations Office and complete the proper paperwork to request an appeal hearing of the interim support order.

2. How long is the interim support order effective?

The interim support order stays effective during the request and while the case is on appeal.

3. How soon will the appeal decision be completed?

The judge will issue an order in court that day or provide a court order taking the case under advisement deciding if the order should remain in place or be changed based upon statewide support guidelines. The judge may need further time to review the information to make a decision and will then mail you a copy of the court order.

4. May you contact the judge regarding your case?

It is very important to know that you may not write or telephone a judge concerning your appeal case. This will not positively influence the judge's decision and it is not appropriate communication.

5. May the final order be appealed?

If either party is dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal hearing, they may appeal the final court order of the judge to the Superior Court.