



### We can help!

The local child support agency offers free services to parents and guardians to help them meet their responsibilities to their children.



### Types of services we provide:

- Locate a parent
- Establish paternity
- Establish, modify, and enforce a court order for child support
- Establish, modify, and enforce an order for health insurance coverage

Contact a local child support agency:  
**866-901-3212 toll-free**  
 (within the U.S.)  
**TTY 866-399-4096**



Edmund G. Brown Jr., Governor  
State of California

Diana S. Dooley, Secretary  
California Health and Human Services Agency

Alisha Griffin, Director  
California Department of Child Support Services

1-866-901-3212 (toll-free)  
TTY 1-866-399-4096 (toll-free)  
[www.childsup.ca.gov](http://www.childsup.ca.gov)

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# Your Guide to Child Support Services



*The California Department of Child Support Services does not provide legal services to parents or guardians.*

Department of  
Child Support Services

## Locating parents

If you don't know where the noncustodial parent is located, the local child support agency will try to find the parent to establish paternity (child's father) and/or establish, change, or enforce orders for child support.



## Establishing paternity

The local child support agency can help you establish paternity with a Paternity Opportunity Program Declaration or a court order. The Declaration is a form you can fill out that must be signed by both parents to establish paternity without going to court. The local child support agency will help you arrange for testing when the child's father is in question.

## Seeking health insurance coverage

Your children have a right to health insurance coverage. We will work to make sure your children get the health insurance coverage they need if it is available at no cost or reasonable cost.

## Cooperating with other states

Child support orders can be obtained and enforced, even when the other parent lives in another state.

## Enforcing child support orders

The local child support agency has several ways to collect child support for your children, including:

- Withholding wages from paychecks
- Interception of:
  - State or federal income tax refunds
  - Unemployment benefits
  - Workers' compensation benefits
  - State disability benefits
  - Lottery winnings
- Bank levies (attaching bank accounts)
- License suspensions
- Levies on property
- Passport denials

Some of these enforcement actions are required by law. Others will be used depending on the facts of each case.

## Referrals

If you need assistance in any of the following areas, we will provide you with referrals:

- Visitation or child custody issues
- Domestic violence
- Restraining orders
- Child abuse

## How child support payments are collected & processed

*California child support payments are collected and processed by the California State Disbursement Unit (SDU). Those receiving child support can choose to have payments deposited directly into a bank account or receive payments on an Electronic Payment Card (EPC) that can be used like a debit card. Those making child support payments must consult with the local child support agency or family law facilitator to confirm their eligibility to make child support payments electronically.*

## Establishing child support orders

Once paternity is established, we can help you get a child support order based on each parent's income, visitation, and other information. Most orders will also include a wage assignment so money will be withheld from the noncustodial parent's paycheck to pay child support.

In certain situations, we can help you get a change in your court-ordered child support amount, which is called a "modification."

