

THE FOLLOWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HAVE BEEN DESIGNED FOR EFFICIENT CASE MANAGEMENT

PAYMENTS

Make all payments through the Pennsylvania State Collection and Disbursement Unit (SCDU) on the date set forth in the Order of Support and in the full amount ordered.

To be assured of receiving credit, you must forward a payment coupon with every payment sent to SCDU. Walk-in payments will not be accepted at the Domestic Relations Office. Payments must be made by check or money order. SCDU will not accept cash payments. If you have more than one support case, you should send one payment for all of your support cases. Your PACSES member ID or social security number should be written on the face of your check or money order. SCDU will divide the payment among your cases as required by federal regulation.

All checks and money orders must be made payable to **Pa SCDU** and mailed to:

**PA SCDU
PO BOX 69110
HARRISBURG, PA 17106-9110**

An automated voice response system (**AVR**) is available for payment information 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling **1-877-727-7238**. The

hearing impaired may call **1-877-676-9582**.

Failure to pay support as ordered will result in the filing of a contempt petition, intercept of your income tax refund, denial of passports, intercept of state lottery winnings, mandatory court-ordered attachment of income, publication of the names of delinquent support obligors in newspapers, submission of delinquent arrearage balances to credit agencies, denial or suspension of driver's licenses, CDL licenses and professional licenses of noncustodial parents, seizure of assets and/or any other enforcement procedures available.

On and after the date it is due, each unpaid support payment shall constitute, by operation of law, a judgment against the obligor, as well as a lien against real property.

The filing of a Demand for Hearing/Exceptions to an Order of Support does not stay (delay) the order. You are required to make payments as ordered.

Denial of visitation rights does not permit the right to withhold support payments. There are separate legal proceedings you can follow if your visitation rights are denied. You should contact an attorney as this office is not empowered to enforce visitation rights.

Termination of employment, strike, inability to work and similar

circumstances do not alter the terms of payment, as ordered.

GENERAL POLICY

Both parties must comply with all of the terms of an order of court.

Please put your requests in writing and **do not** make them by telephone. Your mail will be delivered to the officer who is assigned to your case. Written requests build a record for case review. Your right to privacy cannot be served by telephone responses, and we are able to serve you best when your file can be reviewed. If you need to discuss your case, you should come to the office. Please make an appointment with your officer, as prior commitments may prevent the officer from meeting with you on a walk-in basis.

All parties are required to appear at the Domestic Relations Office, upon proper notice. A petitioner's failure to appear may result in the dismissal of the petition.

Both parties shall inform the Domestic Relations Office and all other parties in writing within seven (7) days of any material change in circumstances relevant to the level of support or the administration of the support order, including, but not limited to, loss or change of income or employment and change of personal address or change of address of any child receiving support. If either party willfully fails to inform the Domestic Relations Office of the required information, the Court may adjudge the party to be in contempt of court and may be fined or imprisoned. You must further

advise the office, in writing, of any changes in name, marital status, reconciliation, source of income, as well as children's birth, death, employment and graduation. When you report employment status changes, you are required to give the **full name and complete address** of your employer or source of income or the name and address of the source of insurance and/or other benefits.

Reporting of status changes does not automatically alter the Order of Support. (See section on Modification of Court Orders)

MEDICAL SUPPORT

Assistance is provided for the establishment and enforcement of the non-custodial parent's obligation to provide health insurance. Unless the Order provides otherwise, both parties must provide to all dependents named in an Order of Support medical insurance which is available at no cost or at reasonable cost through employers or if not available on an employment-related or other group basis, either parent or both parents must provide for the parties' children health insurance coverage which is available at reasonable cost, and must forward full information about changes, including acquisition, termination, policy numbers and names and addresses of insurance carriers to the Domestic Relations Office within seven (7) days of the entry of an Order of Support or within seven (7) days of any change in medical insurance coverage.

LOCATION OF ABSENT PARENTS

In establishment and enforcement of a support obligation, we provide services for the location of absent parents. Be prepared to supply us information, such as social security number, date of birth and any other information required. Establishment and enforcement of support across county, state and national boundaries is available. You can help by providing information. Delays sometimes do occur in cases involving other jurisdictions.

GUIDELINES

Support guidelines are available for inspection at the Domestic Relations Office.

MODIFICATIONS (CHANGES) IN SUPPORT ORDERS

Support orders can be changed only when both parties and any assigned agency agree to the change and sign a Modified Agreement and Order of Support or when a Petition to Modify or Petition for Review, if your support order was entered more than three years from the date of the filing of the petition, is presented to the Court.

If both parties have agreed to a specific change in the order, contact your Domestic Relations Officer to request an appointment to sign a new agreement. A Domestic Relations Officer must oversee the entering of an agreement and order.

If you and the other party cannot agree, and you have proof that a substantial change of circumstance has occurred,

such as a change in custody, the child on the support order is over eighteen years of age and is not attending school, there is a substantial increase or decrease in the income of either party, the parties are divorced and the defendant is no longer obligated to support the plaintiff, there are extraordinary and continuing medical expenses not in existence at the time the last order was entered, it can be shown that the increased age of the child(ren) or other factors has increased expenses, the child for whom support is being paid has been adopted, among others, you may have the right to petition the Court for a modification (change) in the Order of Support. You must petition promptly. Modification of Orders of Support are applied only to the period beginning on the date that notice of the petition to modify or petition for review is given to the other party. The practical effect of the law is that a modified support amount will be ordered effective only from the date the petition was received, and prior accumulated arrearages will not be excused, except in very unusual circumstances. Brief changes, inflation, and changes of income resulting from quitting a job, being fired for just cause or other willful reductions of income are **NOT** acceptable reasons to modify a support order. After reviewing the information, the conference officer or permanent hearing officer will recommend to the court either that the current support be modified, or that the petition be dismissed in the event there is not a significant change in circumstances. The recommendation may result in any appropriate increase,

decrease, modification or termination of the prior support order, as well as modification of other terms as authorized by law. **You should be aware that it is possible for the support order to be increased when you seek a decrease or decreased when you seek a increase, as the hearing officer must base a recommendation on the available information and on court guidelines.**

CHILD CARE

Parties receiving subsidized child care may be required to file a support complaint by the Department of Public Welfare. Child care expenses are allocated between the parties in proportion to their net incomes and the obligor's share added to his/her basic support obligation. The party receiving child care payments must notify their Domestic Relations Officer when child care is no longer being provided.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**Domestic Relations Section
of Schuylkill County**

Courthouse

Post Office Box 1192

Pottsville, PA 17901-7192

Phone: (570) 628-1588