

What resources are counted for child support? With few exceptions, child support is based on net income from *all* sources. Your employer is required by law to withhold child support from your wages, and, if ordered, medical support and back child support.

In addition to **current child support**, withholding may include:

- **medical support** - cost of health insurance, Chip, Medicaid
- **dental support**- cost of dental insurance
- **arrearages** - past due or “back” child support.
- **retroactive child support** —support from parent’s separation until orders are made by the court..

Income subject to child support withholding	
Wages, overtime, tips, bonuses, commissions, self-employment income	Yes
Social Security Disability (SSDI); VA Disability	Yes
Unemployment	Yes
Social Security Retirement	Yes
Workers’ Compensation Benefits	Yes
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	No
VA Pension	No
TANF	No

BASIC GUIDELINE CHILD SUPPORT

Number of children	1	2	3	4	5
% Net monthly	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%

MULTIPLE FAMILY ADJUSTED GUIDELINES % Net monthly

Number of other children for whom the obligor has a duty of support	Number of children before the court				
	1	2	3	4	5
0	20%	25.00	30.00	35.00	40.00
1	17.50	22.50	27.38	32.20	37.33
2	16.00	20.63	25.20	30.33	35.43
3	14.75	19.00	24.00	29.00	34.00
4	13.60	18.33	23.14	28.00	32.89
5	13.33	17.86	22.50	27.22	32.00
6	13.14	17.50	22.00	26.60	31.27
7	13.00	17.22	21.60	26.09	30.67

How long do I have to pay support? Usually child support ends when the last child turns 18 or graduates from high school, whichever is later. If your child has a disability, it might last longer. NOTE: if you owe back child support (arrearages), payments will continue even after the child turns 18, until the debt plus interest is paid in full. Terminating parental rights won’t erase child support arrearages.

How can I change the amount of child support? To increase or decrease support, you must show a change in circumstances for the child or either party since the entry of the last child support order. For self-help modification forms, go to www.texaslawhelp.org. You can also ask the Office of Attorney General-Child Support Division (OAG) to review the amount of current support if it’s been at least 3 years since the last child support order AND the current amount varies from the Guidelines by 20% or \$100.

Why can’t I send child support directly to the custodial parent? For court-ordered child support, the law requires payments to pass through the Texas Child Support Disbursement Unit (SDU) to be recorded before forwarding the payment to the custodial parent. Payments sent to the custodial parent are not automatically credited against the child support obligation, and might even be considered a ‘gift’.

We don’t have a child support order. Why is the Attorney General involved? If your child receives food stamps, Medicaid, WIC or other benefits, the OAG has the right file for child support order to offset the cost of those services, even if the parents don’t apply for support.

Do I have to pay support if my child gets dependent benefits based on my disability? Possibly. Disability payments are subject to child support withholding. The court will use the child support guidelines (above) and subtract (off-set) the amount of benefits paid to or for the child as a result of your disability.

Can a Texas child support order be enforced in other states? Yes. Every state is required to uphold the child support orders of another state. Depending on the country, it can also be enforced internationally.

How is child support calculated?

It depends on your *net* monthly income, the total number of children to be included in the order, and whether you have other children. Look at the tables to the left. For one child, support is based on 20% of net monthly income. A net income of \$2000 a month equals Guideline child support of \$400 monthly (\$2000 X 20%). Suppose you have 3 children – two included in child support order and one who resides with you at home from a different relationship. The Multiple Family Adjusted Guidelines would apply. Child support for the two children would be 16% of net monthly income. **NOTE:** (1) The court isn’t *required* to follow the guidelines in every case. (2) Medical support and other payments are *in addition to* current support.