

Call the DCS office nearest you or call  
800-442-KIDS (5437) to find the office  
handling your case.

#### DCS Offices

Everett	800-729-7580 425-438-4800
Fife	866-243-4449 253-922-0454
Kennewick	800-345-9981 509-374-2000
Olympia	800-345-9964 360-664-6900
Seattle	800-526-8658 206-341-7000
Spokane	800-345-9982 509-363-5000
Tacoma	800-345-9976 253-597-3700
Vancouver	800-345-9984 360-696-6100
Wenatchee	800-535-1113 509-886-6800
Yakima	800-441-0859 509-249-6000
Headquarters	800-457-6202 360-664-5000



**Do I still  
have to  
pay child  
support  
if I am in  
prison?**



**DCS** Division of Child Support

## **Does my child support responsibility go away while I am in prison?**

No. Your child support payments are due every month even if you are in prison or in jail.

If you cannot pay, your support debt continues to get bigger each month unless you change the order.

## **What can I do?**

You can ask the Division of Child Support (DCS) to:

- Review your child support order to lower the current support payments. This may modify your support order. If you do not have a case with DCS, you can apply for our services.
- Lower or write-off your support debt if it is owed to the state of Washington and your release date is near. This process is called a Conference Board.
- Send you an application for services. We establish paternity, and establish, modify, and enforce orders for child support and health insurance.

DCS does not provide visitation, custody, or parenting plan services.

Contact DCS by completing and returning the form attached to this brochure.

## **How can changing (modifying) my order help me?**

Support payments should be set to reflect your current situation.

Modifying a child support order is the way to change the current child support payment.

- It does not change your support debt.
- It does not happen automatically - you have to ask for it, and work with us to make it happen. We work with Administrative Law Judges and Prosecuting Attorneys to modify orders. It can take many months to modify an order.

## **How does modification work?**

No matter how long ago your situation changed, modifications are "prospective" only. This means a modification cannot change any support debt, only future payments can be changed.

## **When will the new amount start?**

The new order sets the start date of the change. The earliest it can start is the court filing date. It is not the date you asked DCS to review your order.

## **What if I get a new notice?**

DCS can serve you legal notices while you are in prison, including a notice to establish a new support order.

### ***Do not ignore mail from DCS!***

Usually, you have 20 days to answer the legal notices we send you. (Read the notice for information about your rights).

- If you object to the terms in the notice, you can ask us for relief.
- If you do not answer the notice, it becomes final after 20 days pass and we will start to enforce it.

## **What happens after I am released from prison and go back to work?**

Tell DCS where you are working. We will work with you to make payment arrangements. The sooner you call DCS the easier it will be for us to work with you. We must collect your current support and a payment towards any support debt.

## **What if I cannot find work after I am released and I do not modify my order?**

Sometimes, where financial hardships occur, DCS will consider write-off part or all of a child support debt owed to the state of Washington. We cannot write-off debt that is owed to someone else or to another state.

***Call DCS and we will work with you!***