

# CHILD SUPPORT



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## Office of Child Support Enforcement

The goal of the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) Program, which was established in 1975 under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, is to promote family sufficiency and child well-being, both financially and medically. Recent laws, including the Family Support Act of 1988, provide for strong child support enforcement measures to assure that parental responsibility is met.

Child Support Enforcement services are available automatically for families receiving assistance under Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) programs. For more information, see <http://www.colorado.gov/coloradoworks> and <http://dhs.elpasoco.com/Pages/default.aspx>.

Child support services are also available to families not receiving TANF who apply for such services. Child support payments that are collected on behalf of non-TANF families are sent to the family. Some states may charge for the cost of services rendered.

The four major services provided by the Child Support Enforcement Program include: 1) locating absent parents; 2) establishing paternity; 3) establishing child support obligations; and 4) enforcing child support orders. The El Paso County CSE office is located at 30 East Pikes Peak Avenue, 2nd Floor, Colorado Springs, CO 80903. Call (719) 457-6331 or 1-866-270-2606 to schedule an appointment with the agency. An application for services with the El Paso County CSE is available at <https://childsupport.state.co.us/siteuser/do/general/application/eAppforservices>. More information is available at <https://childsupport.state.co.us> and <http://elpasocountycss.com/>.

## Locating Absent Parents

Child support enforcement officials use local information and resources of State and Federal Parent Locator services to locate parents for child support enforcement, or to find a parent in parental kidnapping/custody disputes.

## Establishing Paternity and Support Obligations

Establishing paternity (legally identifying a child's father) is a necessary first step for obtaining an order for child support when children are born out of wedlock. Establishing paternity also provides access to: 1) Social security, pension, and retirement benefits; 2) health insurance; and 3) interaction with members of both parents' families. Many fathers voluntarily acknowledge paternity. Otherwise, father, mother, and child can be required to submit to genetic tests. States generally allow testing until the age of 18.

States have guidelines to establish how much a parent should pay for child support. The Colorado State Judicial System includes worksheets on its website, as do other states. Support agency staff

can take child support cases to court, or to an administrative hearing process to establish the order. Health insurance coverage must also be considered.

## Enforcing Child Support Orders

Parents paying child support may be required to have the payment deducted directly from their paycheck and sent to the child support office or court by their employer. If the child support payment is less than 90% of the order and/or overdue, it can be collected from federal and state income tax and liens on property (or even having the property sold). Unpaid child support can be reported to credit bureaus, which negatively impacts a person's credit rating. Additionally, their driver's license may be suspended and loss of recreational licenses.

The local District Attorney handles cases involving non-payment of support. There are both criminal and civil penalties available for those who chronically fail to pay support (but it is unlikely that one can go to prison for failing to pay child support). The Child Support Enforcement unit is capable of enforcing both local and out-of-state support orders in the local courts. They can also coordinate child support enforcement action with other states. The El Paso County District Attorney's phone number is (719) 520-6000, and Child Support Services of El Paso County, Colorado's phone number is (719) 457-6331.

## Sources:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/>;  
<http://www.colorado.gov/coloradoworks>;  
<http://dhs.elpasoco.com/Pages/default.aspx>;  
<https://childsupport.state.co.us>;  
<http://elpasocountycss.com/>.

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