At Denver Human Services, we partner with parents to help them provide the financial, medical and emotional support their children need to thrive.

Our Child Support Services team assists families by:

- Locating a non-custodial parent
- Establishing paternity and creating a legal relationship between a father and child
- Establishing, enforcing and modifying child support orders
- Offering parenting classes and other parenting supports
- Connecting families to other resources offered by Denver Human Services or community partners

In this booklet, we offer an overview of the child support process, describe our parenting program and highlight other helpful legal and community resources that are available to Denver families. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact us at (720) 944-4DHS (4347), or visit us online at denvergov.org/humanservices.
STARTING THE CHILD SUPPORT PROCESS

If you want to obtain child support for your child, we can help. The first step in that process involves completing a Child Support Services application, which you can do online at childsupport.state.co.us. You can also call (720) 944-4DHS to have an application mailed to you.

You can apply as either the parent or guardian of a child, or as the parent who would be responsible for making payments. Immigration status is not a factor, but you must be at least 18 years old to apply. Otherwise, your parent or guardian can apply for you. There is a $20 application fee.

If you are a Colorado Works client, you will automatically be contacted by our team to fill out a Child Support Services application. Once that is done, we will schedule an intake appointment with you. Please be sure to keep your appointment, as your Colorado Works benefits may stop if you don’t. Most appointments are conducted over the phone or online. If you’re scheduled for an in-person appointment and have trouble getting there, please call us at (720) 944-4DHS, and we’ll try to offer a closer location.
Please note: If you feel that your safety or the safety of your child would be at risk if your contact information were shared with the other parent, please let us know. You can file a Non-Disclosure of Information request with your Child Support Services application. Your technician will discuss this with you during your intake interview.
PREPARING FOR YOUR INTAKE APPOINTMENT

Once your application has been reviewed, your case will be assigned to a technician, and you will be scheduled for an intake appointment. In preparation, please gather the documents you will need to provide.

Those may include:
- Birth certificates for your child or children
- Social Security numbers (for both parent and child, if available)
- Government-issued photo identification for the parent or caretaker relative applying for child support
- Divorce decree (if applicable)
- Legal documents that allocate parental responsibility (if applicable)

The technician assigned to your case will contact you to ensure you know which documents you will need to provide.
ESTABLISHING PATERNITY

If the father of your child isn’t listed on the birth certificate or hasn’t been established, we may need to do genetic testing by taking what is known as a buccal swab. (That simply involves collecting skin cells by rubbing a swab on the inside of the mouth.) We can conduct genetic testing in our Child Support Services offices or a satellite location. Once the test results are known and paternity has been confirmed, we can establish a child support order.
LOCATING NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

The location of the non-custodial parent must be known in order to establish a child support order. You will be asked to provide information about where the other parent lives or works. We will use this information to contact the other parent and send necessary paperwork.

ESTABLISHING A CHILD SUPPORT ORDER

A child support order may be established in the Child Support Services offices or in court, depending on your circumstances. You and the other parent will be asked to provide information about employment, medical insurance, child care costs, visitation and costs for your child’s education. You will also be asked if you have responsibility for other children. All this information will be used to calculate the payment amount using the Colorado Child Support Guidelines.

If a case is handled through the courts, it will generally be assigned to the Denver Juvenile Court. The District Court will handle cases that involve a divorce or allocation of parental responsibility.
Although not required to establish a child support order, some parents choose to hire an attorney to consult or to represent them in this process, while others choose to represent themselves, which is known as pro se representation. Both the Denver Juvenile and District courts offer resources for people who are representing themselves. You can find the addresses and phone numbers for those offices, as well as information about other community legal assistance services, in the “Resources” section of this booklet.
Child Support Services is responsible for enforcing child support orders once they are established. That involves ensuring payments are received on time, monitoring a case if payments aren’t being received, and taking action to address non-payment issues when necessary. In Colorado, the non-custodial parent is generally responsible for making payments until a child becomes 19 years old.

Child support payments cannot be made using cash, but there are other convenient options for making and receiving payments.
Once an order is established, the case is automatically set up with the Family Support Registry for payments to be received and processed. Child support payments must be made through the Family Support Registry, unless the court has authorized you to pay the custodial parent directly. To make your child support payment, you can contact the Family Support Registry.

To make your child support payment:
- Customer Service nationwide: (800) 374-6558
- Customer Service local: (303) 299-9123
- Email: CDHS_FSRCustomerService@state.co.us
- Payment address: P.O. Box 2171 Denver, CO 80201
You may also want to create an account on the Colorado State Child Support website at childsupport.state.co.us, which will enable you to monitor your account balance and track payments and disbursements made through the Family Support Registry. (You can also find the website by entering “Colorado State Child Support” in your web browser.) The state website includes a wealth of other resources for families as well. If you need assistance creating your account, please call the customer care line at (720) 944-2960.
Other options for making and receiving payments include:

**Non-Custodial Parent**  
*(parent who is making payments)*  
- Debit/credit card payment: $4.95 fee or 2.95% (whichever is greater)  
- Mail-in: Family Support Registry  
  P.O. Box 2171, Denver, CO 80201  
  (include Family Support Registry account number)  
- One-time check or recurring automatic withdrawal: Using checking account on the state website at childsupport.state.co.us.  
- Pay-by-phone (You will need to set-up an account at childsupport.state.co.us to receive a pay-by-phone pin number.)

**Custodial Party**  
*(parent or guardian who is receiving payments)*  
- Direct deposit: Can be made into a checking or savings account, or prepaid card  
- Child support payment card (apply online at co.smartchildsupport.com)  
- Paper check
ENFORCING ORDERS

Child support orders are court orders that Child Support Services is charged with enforcing. If you fail to make payments on time and in full, you may be subject to the following judicial or administrative remedies.

- **Driver’s license suspension**
  You may be required to make three months of consecutive payments or a lump-sum payment to have the suspension lifted. You may also be charged a $95 reinstatement fee.

- **Negative credit reports**
  Once a payment has been missed in part or in full, Child Support Services can file a report with all three credit bureaus.

- **Loss of tax refunds**
  Once you have an arrears balance of $250 or more, you are reported to the Internal Revenue Service for non-payment and any future tax refunds may be intercepted. Joint returns may also be placed on an interception hold so a non-custodial parent’s portion of a refund can be reviewed and applied to child support arrears.
• Recreation license suspension for one year
Any application for recreational licenses will be denied. Additional years of suspension may be added if the non-custodial parent continues to apply for a recreational license while their child support payments remain in arrears.

• Bank account seizure
Account funds may be frozen and released to the Family Support Registry to pay child support arrears. Each bank has a different policy for bank interceptions. The account may be frozen until the reported child support balance has been deducted from the checking or savings account.
MODIFYING CHILD SUPPORT ORDERS

Life circumstances can change, and you can ask to have your child support order reviewed if you’ve lost your job, experienced an increase in child care payments or seen your financial circumstances change in other ways. When you make a modification request, we review your current child support order to determine if it’s set at an appropriate support amount based on your new situation.

Either parent can request a review of your child support order. To get started, contact us at (720) 944-4DHS and ask for a modification packet, which will include a request form. You can also download a modification packet from the Colorado State Child Support website at childsupport.state.co.us. (From the home page, click on the “Child Support Orders” tab and select the “Changing an Order” option from the drop-down menu.)
To modify an order, we use a “review and adjustment” process that begins with gathering information from both parents about your income and any expenses related to raising your child or children. Once you provide that information, your technician will recalculate what the support amount would be under the Colorado Child Support Guidelines.

To file a motion to modify a support order, your technician must verify that there would be at least a 10 percent change from your current order. If not, we can't move forward.
ACCESSING LEGAL RESOURCES

Juvenile & District Pro Se Office Resources
Most child support cases are handled through the Denver Juvenile Court or District Court. Both courts offer resources for parties who are representing themselves, which is known as pro se representation. You can contact or visit those offices at:

- **Denver Juvenile Court**
  520 W Colfax
  Denver, CO 80204
  Pro Se Office number: (720) 337-0570

- **Denver District Court**
  1437 Bannock St.
  Denver, CO 80202
  Pro Se Office number: (303) 606-2300
OTHER LEGAL RESOURCES

*Family Law: Ask-a-Lawyer Clinics*
Held at the Denver District Courts at 1437 Bannock St., Room 281, “Ask a Lawyer” clinics are offered for divorce and custody/allocation of parental responsibilities cases. The clinics take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. every fourth Thursday of the month, excluding November and December. These walk-in consultations last about 15 minutes per person and are provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

*Family Law Clinics*
Held at our main Richard T. Castro Human Services Center at 1200 Federal Boulevard, Room 1018, these family law forums take place from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month.

*Free Legal Assistance for Low-Income Residents*
Colorado Legal Services offers legal help on a walk-in basis every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Address: 1905 Sherman St., Suite 400; Phone: (303) 837-1313.
FINDING OTHER ASSISTANCE

**GIVE Center**
Located at our main Richard T. Castro Human Services Center at 1200 Federal Boulevard, the GIVE Center provides free, essential services and items to Denver residents. Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to noon, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.; Phone: (720) 944-GIVE; Website: denvergov.org/give; Email: give@denvergov.org.

**Colorado Crisis Services**
Colorado Crisis Services is a statewide resource for mental health, substance use or emotional crisis help, information and referrals. Call the 24-hour hotline at 1-844-493-TALK, or text TALK to 38255 to be connected to a mental health professional and supportive community resources.

**2-1-1**
The 2-1-1 hotline is a free multilingual service dedicated to helping residents find non-emergency health and human services resources. 2-1-1 operators are available every Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.. Please note: If you have a life-threatening emergency, please call 9-1-1 instead.
SUPPORTING PARENTS AND BUILDING PARENTING SKILLS

Being an engaged, supportive parent starts with addressing obstacles in your life that are making it hard for you to meet life’s obligations. If you’re responsible for paying or receiving child support, we can connect you to resources that will help you build problem-solving skills and move forward.

Through our Parenthood Program, you’ll learn more about:

- Employment assistance
- Child support order modification
- Housing and food assistance
- Help with child support driver’s license suspension and other non-payment consequences
- Guidance with court and legal proceedings
- Other individual assistance services
We also offer free information, classes and support groups that address a variety of parenthood-related topics for both men and women. To learn more, contact us at (720) 944-4DHS, or visit us online at denvergov.org/humanservices.
SERVING YOU

Community-Facing Team
In response to your feedback, we created the Community-Facing Team to serve you at more locations throughout Denver.

At each location, we can:
  • Answer all child support questions
  • Take applications
  • Help with order modifications

Our Community-Facing Team is currently serving residents at locations in the Montbello, Park Hill, Sun Valley and Westwood neighborhoods. To find the location near you, please call (720) 944-4DHS and ask about our Community-Facing Team services, locations and hours.

Contact Us
Denver residents can also reach the Child Support Services team by:
  • Ph: (720) 944-4DHS
  • Online: denvergov.org/humanservices
  • Main Office:
    Richard T. Castro Human Services Center
    1200 Federal Boulevard
    Denver, CO 80204