

FAQ

What services does the Family Support Division provide?

The Family Support Division (FSD) helps families by establishing paternity, establishing child support orders, modifying child support orders and enforcing child support orders.

How do I apply for child support services?

To apply for child support services, submit an application online or print the application and mail the completed forms to the Family Support Division, PO BOX 6790, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

When you submit an online or paper application, FSD will open a case using the information you provided, send you a letter confirming case opening and provide you with FSD contact information and a case number. Please keep this case-opening notice, with the case number, available for future reference.

Anyone receiving public assistance [i.e., Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or MOHealthNet] is automatically referred to FSD for child support services. An application is not required for TANF and MOHealthNet participants.

What if I can't answer all of the questions in the application form?

We suggest that you answer the questions as completely as possible based on information you know or can easily obtain. The more information you provide up front, the more quickly and effectively your case is worked.

Although the Family Support Division (FSD) has access to many state and federal sources that provide address and other information, some information is out-of-date by the time we receive it. You may be able to provide information useful to FSD from copies of tax forms, military papers, vehicle registrations, family members and friends, etc. If you obtain more information after you submit your application, call FSD to report the new information.

When submitting your application, include copies of all the appropriate legal documents (e.g., birth certificate, marriage certificate, divorce decree, protection order, order that names the child(ren)'s legal father or discusses child support or medical support, etc.).

What if I want services, but I'm concerned about receiving mail or phone calls at my home?

Complete a Request for Use of Alternate Address to provide an address other than your home address as your contact address. Complete the Notice to Non-TANF Applicants: Domestic Violence Services to provide the Family Support Division (FSD) with a phone number or time during the day when it is safe for you to receive calls.

If you have been a victim or feel that you are at risk of being a victim of family violence from the other parent, advise FSD to take action to prevent your home address from being released to the other parent. FSD will then make sure that your address and Social Security number are not included on forms sent to the other parent. Below are links to information regarding resources near you that provide help for victims of domestic violence:

<http://www.mocadsv.org/http://www.ncdsv.org/http://www.sos.mo.gov/business/SafeAtHome/Default.aspx> You may also contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline number at 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE).

What is “Paternity” and how do I know if I need paternity establishment services?

Paternity means fatherhood. Paternity establishment is the process of determining that a man is a child’s father. When the parents of a child are NOT married at the beginning of or any time during the pregnancy or at the time of the child’s birth, the man is NOT legally considered to be the parent of the child, so paternity establishment is necessary. Paternity must be determined prior to establishing a child support order.

How is paternity established for a child?

Unmarried parents may establish legal paternity for a child in one of two ways: 1. Both parents may sign an Affidavit Acknowledging Paternity at the hospital when the baby is born. The Affidavit Acknowledging Paternity allows the parents to voluntarily declare paternity for the child. When both parents properly complete and sign their respective affidavits, the man becomes the legal father of the child and his name is placed on the child’s birth certificate. Hospital staff give this form to parents who are not married. If both parents complete the Affidavit Acknowledging Paternity before the hospital files the child’s birth certificate, the father’s name is added to the child’s birth certificate and the man becomes the child’s legal father.

If the parents don’t complete an Affidavit Acknowledging Paternity while the mother and child are in the hospital, it’s not too late. The parents can contact the Department of Health and Senior Services’ Bureau of Vital Records or the Family Support Division (FSD) to get an affidavit and assistance in completing the affidavit to establish legal paternity.

2. Obtain an order naming the man as the father of the child. FSD can assist with obtaining an order that establishes paternity.

What If I Am Uncertain About the Paternity of My Child?

Free genetic testing may be obtained through the Family Support Division (FSD). Genetic testing (also known as DNA testing) involves a simple swab of a Q-tip-like swab inside the cheek of the child, mother and the man. The samples are then sent to a laboratory for testing. If the results of the genetic test show at least a 98 percent probability that the man is the father, then the man is the presumed father under Missouri law. Genetic testing alone does not establish legal paternity. You must complete an Affidavit Acknowledging Paternity or obtain an order naming the man as the father of the child.

To speak with a child support specialist about establishing paternity for your child, call toll-free at (855) 454-8037.

What if I don't have a child support order?

The Family Support Division (FSD) establishes child support orders. Typically, a child support order requires a parent to provide monthly cash payments and health insurance to support his or her child. When determining a monthly child support amount, FSD uses the child support guidelines set by the Missouri Supreme Court. These guidelines consider both parents' incomes and child-related expenses. The Missouri Child Support Amount Calculation Worksheet (Form 14) is used to calculate the child support amount.

How can I get my child support amount changed (modified)?

To ask the Family Support Division (FSD) to review your child support order, you must submit a written request to FSD. Federal regulations require FSD to review child support orders upon request to determine if the support amount should be adjusted or if a medical support obligation is needed. A modification review is appropriate when the order was entered, modified or reviewed for modification at least 36 months ago, unless there has been a substantial change in circumstances to justify an earlier review. The review will determine if the support amount should be adjusted (up or down) or if a medical support obligation is needed.

What actions are taken to enforce an existing child support order?

The Family Support Division helps families receive their child support through enforcement actions allowed under state and federal laws. These actions include ordering employers and other payors to withhold income, ordering employers to enroll children in health insurance plans, intercepting federal and state income tax refunds, and a variety of other actions. To speak with someone about child support enforcement-related services, call toll-free 866-313-9960.

What are my privacy rights?

Please read the following regarding your privacy rights:

Notice of Privacy Practices Regarding Your Protected Health Information

Notice of Privacy Practices Regarding Personally Identifiable Information