

How is Child Support Calculated?

Since 1990, Maryland law has required that judges use mandatory guidelines to establish or modify child support orders. These Child Support Guidelines provide a formula for calculating child support based on a proportion of each parent's income.

The Child Support Guidelines take the following into account:

- each parent's gross income;
- the costs of medical insurance and child care;
- any other support the non-custodial parent is actually paying;
- alimony received or paid;
- extraordinary medical expenses; and
- other expenses such as private school costs and transportation.



The guidelines also consider the amount of time the child spends with each parent. The situation may be considered "shared" or "joint" custody and different formulas are used for each arrangement.

Do gifts, clothing or supplies that I buy for my children count towards child support I owe?

No. These are not considered as part of your child support obligation.

How Do the Guidelines Work?

The guidelines look similar to the worksheets and charts you use when calculating your income taxes. By filling in your information on the guideline worksheet, and then referring to a table of dollar amounts, you can estimate what you will be ordered to pay, based on your situation.

Where Can I Get Forms?

You can obtain copies of Maryland's Child Support Guidelines and worksheets from your local circuit court clerk's office, your local child support enforcement office, the pro se assistance project, law library or the Internet.

Guidelines and worksheets can be found at www.dhr.state.md.us/csea/worksheet.htm, where you can also calculate child support online.

You can also find additional information on the Judiciary's website, at www.courts.state.md.us/family. Maryland courts will apply the guidelines in all cases, unless a party can show that to do so would be unfair and inappropriate.



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