

CALCULATING CHILD SUPPORT



***Wayne County Prosecutor's
Office***

Child Support Division

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How is child support calculated?

Child support is calculated according to the Indiana Child Support Guidelines, which are laws that courts must follow when they order child support. A child support calculation under the Guidelines involves many different factors:

- *Both parents' gross weekly incomes*
- *Whether each parent has other children, and the age of those children*
- *The amount of any health insurance premiums that either parent pays*
- *The amount of daycare expenses that either parent pays*
- *The number of overnights that the noncustodial parent spends with the child each year*

What does the court use for my income if I am not working?

If you are unemployed, but you do not have a disability that prevents you from working, the court will impute minimum wage for you in the child support worksheet, which is currently \$290 per week, or \$7.25 per hour times a 40-hour work week.

Do I have to pay child support if I am receiving disability?

Maybe. If you are receiving regular Social Security Disability benefits you will have a child support obligation. However, if your child receives a direct benefit from the Social Security Administration, it will count as a credit toward your child support obligation. If the amount your child is receiving is greater than your child support obligation, then you will have a zero child support order.

Do I have to pay child support if I am receiving SSI?

If you are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), you will have a zero child support order. SSI is a welfare program for disabled persons who do not qualify for regular disability benefits. Therefore, SSI does not count toward your income and it cannot be garnished for child support payments.

What is gross income?

Gross income is your income from all sources, including employment, social security benefits, unemployment compensation, and workmen's compensation benefits. Gross income does not include Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), or food stamps.

My child's father pays support for an older child. How come that child receives more child support than I do for my child?

The Indiana child Support Guidelines provide for a larger support order for a support payor's oldest child than for any subsequent children. This recognizes the fact that a family's expenses for a first child are usually higher than for a subsequent child.

Is there a minimum child support order in Indiana?

No. Indiana law does not provide for a minimum child support order. A court can order any amount of weekly child support, including zero, so long as the order is based on the Indiana Child Support Guidelines.

My friend receives twice as much child support for her child as I do for my child. Why don't we receive the same amount of child support?

Every child support case is different. Child support orders are based on a number of factors. Difference in these factors, such as the parties' incomes or daycare expenses often can explain any differences in child support orders from one person to the next.

My two step-children live in my home. Do I get credit for them on the child support worksheet?

No. You can only get credit for your biological or legally adopted children under the Indiana Child Support Guidelines.