



Child Support News

Tarrant County DRO

Helping Support
Our Community



CHILD SUPPORT OFFICE

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PAYMENT HISTORIES ONLINE

The Tarrant County Child Support Office (TCCSO) is pleased to announce that unofficial payment histories can now be obtained over the internet @ www.tarrantcounty.com.

This is exciting news for our office, and for many of you, but we hope that you will take a moment and review the following important information before taking a look at our new web site.

- ⌘ **Payment histories available on the web may not reflect all payments made through the SDU.** If you need an official payment history for court or to secure a loan, please contact the Child Support Office. We will carefully review your record. If payments that were made through the SDU are not yet reflected on your Tarrant County record, we will add them before issuing the certified payment record.
- ⌘ **A payment history printed from the Tarrant County web page may *not* be used for court.**
- ⌘ **You will need your Child Support account number, your social security number and a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to access your account online.** The first time you access your account, your PIN will be the last four digits of your social security number. You will be required to change the PIN on the first access. Do not lose (or forget) the PIN you create. You will need it in order to access your account online.

QUESTION: Why must a Record Of Support (ROS) be turned into the Child Support Office for any order affecting child support, even if the account is to pay through the SDU?

ANSWER: For two important reasons:

1. TCCSO is the court appointed registry of your payment records.
2. TCCSO enters the information into the State Disbursement Unit's computer system as soon as we receive it. If we do not receive notice of a court order on a case, monies may not be credited and disbursed in a timely manner.



AN ROS PROVIDES THE CHILD SUPPORT OFFICE WITH THE INFORMATION NECESSARY TO SET UP A CHILD SUPPORT ACCOUNT.

COUPON

Coupon booklets were issued for the first time last year for our customers who pay their child support through Tarrant County. The booklets are used by our payment processing section to expedite the posting of payments.

We appreciate your cooperation in using the coupons, and in letting us know if there was an error of any kind in the booklet you received.

Coupons are printed using the most current information we have on file regarding your account. If payment amounts are incorrect, it is generally because we have not been notified of a court order that modified your child support.

If your coupon booklet contained incorrect information, and you have not already notified us, please provide our customer service department with your most recent court order, and we will update your account so that the next coupons issued will be correct.

Remember that it is your court order that establishes the amount of child support owed on your case. An incorrect payment amount on your coupon does not change your obligation.

GRADUATION? CONGRATULATIONS!!



What an exciting time for you and for your child. Please accept our best wishes for your high school seniors who are approaching graduation.

For some of you it will mean that your child support obligation has come to an end. Most Texas orders provide that an obligation to pay child support ends when the only child or the youngest child turns 18 years of age, unless the child is still enrolled in high school. In most cases, the obligation continues until the child has graduated (or dropped out) of high school.

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Texas Child Support Disbursement Unit



Tarrant County employers have now been directed to send child support payments through the Texas state disbursement unit as part of a federal requirement for states to have one centralized collection agency for child support for cases finalized after January 1, 1994 subject to income withholding.

What does this mean to the Tarrant County Child Support Office and to you?

1. **Payments:** The TxCSDU's state of the art payment processing center processes approximately one million payments a month. Less than ½ of one percent of those collections are not identified on the day they are received. The majority of this small percentage of payments are identified and cleared within 2 business days. This leaves only 0.17% of the total collections as true unidentified suspense payments. There is no other disbursement unit in the country that has documented numbers as low.
2. **Court Orders:** Although your payments are received at the SDU, the case information is input by Tarrant County Child Support Office staff. Any court order affecting child support must be provided to TCCSO.
3. **Customer Service:** Tarrant County will provide customer service on your account, and will continue to provide complete payment histories with arrearage calculations.
4. **Updates and Address Changes:** TCCSO will update the SDU's computer system, STRADUS, with updates and information regarding your account, including address changes.
5. **Fees:** All payments, including money designated as lawyers fees or DRO fees, received at the TxCSDU are considered to be child support and will be processed as such. All fees should be paid directly to the parties owed.



Are you planning on moving? Don't forget to let us know. You can submit your new address in person to the TCCSO, by mailing to the address below, or by faxing to 817-884-3769. For your protection, your signature is required on all address changes. Address change forms are available at www.tarrantcounty.com.

To call the Child Support Office:

Dial (817) 884-1475. You will be asked to press 1 for English or 2 for Spanish. From the next menu:

Press 2- For general information, use this option if you do not know your account number.

Press 3 - For account specific info, such as the last two payments made to your account, date of last address change or income withholding order. Use this option to speak to a customer service representative.



DID YOU KNOW . . .

Tarrant County has the first successful county operated IV-D local rule Monitoring Program in the state of Texas with an average **83%** payment rate. According to the U.S. census bureau, the national average child support payment rate is **58%**.

This proactive method of monitoring child support payments from the beginning of the obligation helps to prevent the accumulation of large arrearages which benefits the obligee, the obligor, and of course, the child. Both parties can request administrative reviews of their child support amount to ensure that it is not above or below the Texas Family Code guidelines.

As a participant in the federal IV-D program, the monitoring unit has many administrative resources available for the collection of your child support, including:

- income withholding
- income tax refund intercept
- financial liens
- license suspension
- passport denial

We send collection letters, make collection calls and assess additional payments through income withholding if your account is in arrears. If these administrative remedies are not effective, we will refer your case to the Tarrant County Domestic Relations Enforcement division to file contempt charges.

The monitoring program is one of the most effective tools available for the collection of child support, and is provided to you *free of charge*. It is made possible through a partnership of the Tarrant County Domestic Relations Office, the Texas Office of the Attorney General and the United States Office of Child Support Enforcement.

Only orders that were finalized on or after October 16, 2000 are eligible for monitoring. If your case is not eligible, and you need enforcement on unpaid child support, you may contact your private attorney, DRO Enforcement @ 817- 884-1879 or the Office of the Attorney General @ 972-339-3100.

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GRADUATION?

If your only child or youngest child is also 18 years of age, your child support obligation may have ended. The following requirements must be met to close a child support account:

- ✓ There must be no legal action or litigation of any kind currently pending in the case.
- ✓ The child must be eighteen (18) years old.
- ✓ There must be a current address on file for the obligee.
- ✓ Child support must be current with no arrearage.
- ✓ Domestic Relations Office fees must be current.

Documentation must be provided, necessary documents are:

- ✓ Copy of last Court Order *and*
- ✓ Copy of high school diploma, *or*
 - a). Certified or notarized letter from school with date of graduation, *or*
 - b). Certified or notarized high school transcript (with date of graduation), *or* GED certificate.

After documentation has been provided, if an income withholding order is in place, the Child Support Office will notify the employer to discontinue deductions.