



## Division of Child Support

### One Income Withholding Order (IWO) Per Case

#### Frequently Asked Questions for Employers (FAQ)

**Q1: Why is DCS changing the way it issues Income Withholding Orders (IWO) to employers?**

A1: DCS is following the federal requirements which state that one IWO must be issued per case, not per employee/ parent as we have done in the past. This change will make it easier for employers to track changes in withholding orders because each order will have a unique case number.

**Q2: Will DCS update all IWOs at once?**

A2: DCS will not be updating all IWOs in place at one time. Instead, multiple IWOs will be phased in over time and will be issued one per case as they are identified in the normal course of business. Most other states already use this process so it may already be familiar to employers.

**Q3: Does DCS send more than one order / notice for a parent if the parent has more than one case?**

A3: Yes. The orders / notices for the same parent will all have the same remittance ID / account number, but each one will have a different case number. An order / notice for a specific case is issued, amended, and terminated separately from those issued on the parent's other cases. Add the amounts together to get the total withholding amount.

**Q4: How much does an employer withhold when they receive more than one order / notice from DCS for the same parent?**

A4: Add the amounts of the multiple orders / notices together to get the total amount to withhold from the parent's disposable earnings. Do not withhold more than 50 percent in any pay period.

**Q5: Can the same child be listed on more than one order / notice?**

A5: Yes. A child may be listed on more than one order /notice because the parent may owe current support on one case, and owe back support to one or more custodial parties on other cases. There should be, however, only one order for current support for a child.

**Q6: What do I do if I receive multiple orders / notices for the same parent and I am already withholding 50% of the parent's disposable income?**

A6: Continue to withhold and remit 50% of the parent's disposable income. Keep all orders / notices on file until released or you no longer employ or owe the parent money. You must honor all orders / notices to the greatest extent possible.

**Q7: Can I combine payments when a parent has more than one order / notice from DCS?**

A7: Yes! Employers are still encouraged to send one payment per pay period regardless of the number of cases and IWOs. DCS will continue to accept payments [electronically](#) or by check with electronic payments being the preferred method. Clearly show the parent's name and account number on the payment. DCS will distribute your single payment between the parent's multiple cases based on federal and state regulations.

**Q8: Can I combine payments for more than one parent?**

A8: Yes. You may combine the amounts withheld and [send a single payment](#) to the Washington State Support Registry. However, you must clearly show each parent's name, account number, and portion of the payment.

**Q9: Does DCS have electronic options for processing IWOs?**

A9: Yes. The Electronic Income Withholding Order program (e-IWO) is an efficient and cost-effective way to electronically exchange income withholding order (IWO) information between child support agencies and employers. This program is managed by the Federal Office of Child Support. More information is available by calling 410-200-4695 or emailing [eiwomail@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:eiwomail@acf.hhs.gov).

**Q10: Where can an employer get more information about the change?**

A10:

- The Income Withholding for Support Cover Letter, DSHS 18-592, has been updated to include information about multiple-IWO situations.
- Go to [www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/division-child-support/employers](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/division-child-support/employers). DCS posts information relevant to employers, including information about the change to how we issue IWOs and Frequently Asked Questions, on our public website.
- Contact the support officer handling the specific case in question. Call 800-442-KIDS and select option 2, 3. Enter the case number when prompted.
- An employer may call the Employer Hotline at 1-800-591-2760 or contact the Community Relations Unit (CRU) at [dcs-cru@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:dcs-cru@dshs.wa.gov).