



# Employer's Guide to Child Support



*Washington State*  
Department of Social  
& Health Services

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*Transforming lives*

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*As an employer, you are a key partner in Washington State's child support program. With your help, over 350,000 children receive child support services through Washington State. Thank you!*

*This guide is designed to provide you with the information needed to fulfill your responsibilities under federal and state law. This includes reporting newly hired employees, withholding and sending child support payments and enrolling employees and their children in medical insurance plans.*

*With your support, we can work together to improve the lives of children.*

## **If you have questions, please contact us.**

**Toll-Free:** 800-591-2760  
**E-mail:** DCS-CRU@dshs.wa.gov  
**DCS Web:** [www.childsupportonline.wa.gov](http://www.childsupportonline.wa.gov)  
**Write:** Division of Child Support  
PO Box 11520  
Tacoma, WA 98411-5520  
**Send Payments:** WSSR  
PO Box 45868  
Olympia, WA 98504-5868

### **Child Support Laws:**

Each section of this Guide includes legal citations from the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Revised Code of Washington (RCW), and Washington Administrative Code (WAC).

### **Law Web Sites:**

<http://www.gpo.gov>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw>

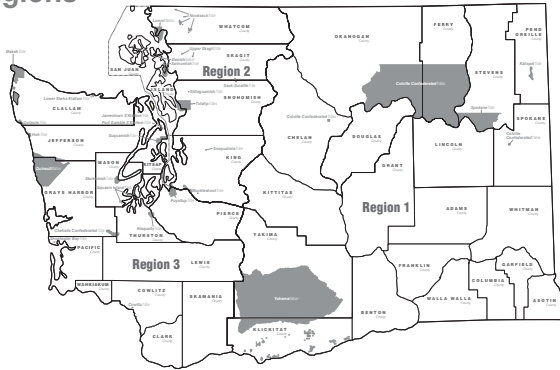
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac>

### **Tribal Employers:**

Employer instructions differ for tribal enterprises and Indian-owned businesses located on reservations or trust land. The sovereign status of each Tribe influences child support procedures. Some Indian tribes have cooperative agreements with the Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Child Support (DCS), while others have their own child support programs, laws and policies. Call us and ask for the Regional Tribal Liaison. Or go to the Tribal Web Site at: [www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/division-child-support/tribal-relations](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/division-child-support/tribal-relations)

# Contact DCS

## DSHS Regions



## DCS Offices

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<b>Everett:</b>	<b>Toll-free 800-729-7580</b> or <b>425-438-4800</b>
<b>Kennewick:</b>	<b>Toll-free 800-345-9981</b> or <b>509-374-2000</b>
<b>Olympia:</b>	<b>Toll-free 800-345-9964</b> or <b>360-664-6900</b>
<b>Seattle:</b>	<b>Toll-free 800-526-8658</b> or <b>206-341-7000</b>
<b>Spokane:</b>	<b>Toll-free 800-345-9982</b> or <b>509-363-5000</b>
<b>Tacoma:</b>	<b>Toll-free 800-345-9976</b> or <b>253-597-3700</b>
<b>Vancouver:</b>	<b>Toll-free 800-345-9984</b> or <b>360-696-6100</b>
<b>Wenatchee:</b>	<b>Toll-free 800-535-1113</b> or <b>509-886-6800</b>
<b>Yakima:</b>	<b>Toll-free 800-441-0859</b> or <b>509-249-6000</b>
<b>DCS Headquarters:</b>	<b>Toll-free 800-457-6202</b> or <b>360-664-5000</b>

# New Hire Reporting

Washington State employers must report all newly hired employees to the Washington State Support Registry (WSSR), which is maintained by DCS. We use this information to collect child support.

Labor and Industries and the Employment Security Department also use new hire information to identify fraudulent accident and unemployment claims.

A newly hired employee is defined as one who has never worked for you before, or a former employee who has come back after a separation of at least sixty consecutive days.

## Report all newly hired or rehired employees:

- Report within 20 days of the hire or rehire date.
- If this is your first time reporting, report everyone since your last quarterly report to Employment Security.
- Report even if more than 20 days passed since you hired the employee.
- Report all hires regardless of age, gender or hours worked.

## Include in the report

### Employee Information:

- Name
- Address
- Social Security Number
- Date of Birth
- Date of Hire (first day the employee works for pay. For a rehired employee, report the date the employee returned to work for pay.)

### Employer Information:

- Business Name
- Business Address
- Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)

### Reporting Methods:

- Internet: <https://secure.dshs.wa.gov/dcsonline/>  
Provides an E-mail Report Confirmation.
- Fax reports to: 800-782-0624
- Phone reports to: 800-562-0479

### Multi-State Employer Registration:

Employers doing business in two or more states must register with the National New Hire Program and report all new hires to one state.

### Registration options:

- Online: <https://ocsp.acf.hhs.gov/OCSE/>
- Fax: 410-277-9325
- Phone: 410-277-9470
- Include: Business name, address, phone number, and Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)

Law: 45 CFR 303.108, RCW 26.23.040, WAC 388-14A-8200

# Wage Withholding

State and federal law require DCS issue a wage or income withholding notice when an employee's child support order contains withholding language.

DCS sends a withholding notice even if the employee (or independent contractor) is not behind in child support payments.

- Notices are effective the day they are received.
- State and Federal laws do not require DCS to give the employee advance notice.
- DCS sends withholding notices by regular mail, certified mail or personal service.
- You must return the "Answer" form within 20 days after receiving the notice.

## Withholding:

- Withhold the amount asked for on the form and send it to DCS within 7 working days of each payday.
- State law does not allow withholding of more than 50 percent of the employee's net income (disposable earnings).
- Disposable earnings are the wages left after taking out taxes and mandatory fees.
- Tax deductions include FICA, income taxes, Labor and Industries (unemployment insurance).
- Fees include union dues, and some retirement deductions.
- Wages of an independent contractor or employee include bonuses, commissions and draws against earnings.
- Tips and gratuities under an employer's control are subject to collection action.
- Convert housing, rent and other benefits paid instead of wages to dollar amounts and count them as part of net wages.

## Other States' Withholding Orders:

- The federal income withholding order may come from Washington or any other state.
- Follow Washington State law and do not exceed the 50 percent of net withholding limit.
- If you receive orders from more than one state telling you to withhold from the parent's earnings, call us immediately at: 800-457-6202.

## Failure to Withhold:

- DCS holds employers responsible for payment of all child support money required to be taken from wages.
- Your failure to honor a notice, or deduct and send wages to DCS can result in a finding of liability for the full child support debt and a fine.

## Calculating Payroll:

- The withholding order tells you to withhold a specific amount each pay period (monthly, semi-monthly, biweekly, or weekly).

## Fee for Administrative Set-up:

- Employers can take a onetime fee of \$10 from the employee's wages and can take \$1 from each future paycheck.

## Release:

- Do not stop taking payroll deductions until you receive an official written release from DCS.

## Employee Termination:

- Tell DCS immediately when an employee no longer works for you.
- State and federal laws do not allow an employer to end the employment or refuse to hire an individual because they have a child support order.
- If found liable in court, the employer can be charged a penalty of double the employee's lost wages plus attorney's fees.

## Employee Questions:

- Refer employee inquiries to the DCS Field Office listed on the notice.

Law: 45 CFR 302.32, 45 CFR 303.100, RCW 26.23.060, RCW 26.23.080, RCW 26.23.090, WAC 388-14A-4000



# Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)

DCS encourages employers to send withheld support money by Electronic Funds Transfer using Electronic Data Interchange (EFT/EDI).

EFT/EDI transactions are cheaper, faster, and safer to send and receive than paper checks. DCS offers several free EFT/EDI choices to meet the needs of any size employer.

**Internet:** <https://secure.dshs.wa.gov/dcsonline/>

- DCS Child Support Online Payment Services (DCSONline), available through Secure Access Washington (SAW), is secure, providing 128-bit encryption.
- DCSONline offers “on-line” authorization.
- To make payments, users create their own User ID, password, and register their bank account.
- You can build an employee data file within the website or upload an existing payroll file and change it as needed.
- Select payment delivery dates.
- Schedule future payments.
- A single bank debit transaction handles multiple employee payments.
- DCSONline is flexible and convenient.

## Repetitive Automated Clearing House (ACH) Debit:

- Employers authorize DCS to automatically take the payment from their bank account.
- Deductions happen on the same day(s) each month until the employer tells DCS to stop.
- Repetitive debit works well for employers with a relatively small, stable work-force, when employee payment amounts do not change.

## ACH Credit

- Funds are transferred to the DCS bank account using an ACH credit transaction similar to a direct deposit.
- The employee identification and payment information is sent in the form of an EDI addenda record through the ACH network with the EFT payment.
- Employers should contact their own financial institution to determine its EFT/EDI capabilities, to seek assistance with formats, standards, and technical requirements to implement this application, and any costs associated with these transactions.
- DCS can accept payments in the Corporate Credit or Debit with addenda (CCD+) and Corporate Trade Exchange (CTX) standardized child support formats.

**For more detailed information,  
call 800-468-7422 or 360-664-5103**

Law: 45 CFR 303.6, RCW 26.23.070

# Medical Insurance Enrollment

DCS sends the National Medical Support Notice (NMSN) with an Order to Withhold Income or by itself.

The NMSN contains two separate sections – Part A and Part B:

Part A contains the following:

- Cover Letter for Part A, Notice to Withhold for Health Care Coverage.
- Part A, Notice to Withhold for Health Care Coverage.
- Employer Response form.
- Instructions to Employer.

Part B contains the following:

- Cover Letter for Part B, Medical Support Notice to Plan Administrator.
- Washington State Addendum to Box 2 of Plan Administrator Response.
- Part B, Medical Support Notice to Plan Administrator.
- Plan Administrator Response form.
- Instructions to Plan Administrator.

## Enrolling both the employee and the children:

- The premium limit shown on the NMSN applies only to the extra cost the employee pays for the children's coverage.
- Example:

Employee plus children	\$ 85 each month
Employee only cost	- 33 each month
<hr/>	
Cost of children's coverage	\$ 52 each month

In this example, the premium limit on the Notice is \$60. The cost of adding the children is \$52 (\$8 less than the premium limit). The employer must enroll both the employee and children.

## Medical insurance provided through a union:

- Send the entire Part B section to the union's third party administrator within 20 business days after the date of the Notice.

## Insurance benefits handled by a third party:

- Send the entire Part B section to the benefits office within 20 business days after the date of the Notice.





### **Employers handling their own enrollments:**

- Follow the Part A, “Instructions to Employer” and Part B, “Instructions to Plan Administrator”.
- Enroll the children in the employee’s insurance plan or in an insurance plan that is available within the premium limit stated in the notice.
- Medical insurance enrollment has priority over dental insurance enrollment.
- If the insurer requires employee enrollment to enroll the children, enroll both the employee and children.  
[See the Unlawful Refusal to Enroll paragraph in the “Instructions to Plan Administrator”.]
- Withhold the premium from the employee’s wages and forward the premium to the insurance company.
- Complete the “Plan Administrator Response” form and the “Washington State Addendum to Box 2 of Plan Administrator Response”.
- Send both forms to DCS within 40 business days after the date of the Notice.

### **More than one notice for an employee:**

- DCS sends a separate NMSN for each child support case an employee may have.
- Add the insurance premiums of all NMSNs to find the total premium limit.

### **Do not enroll the children when:**

- The children’s portion of the insurance premium exceeds the limit stated on the Notice(s) or when:
- The children’s portion of the insurance premium plus the amount taken for child support exceeds 50 percent of the employee’s net disposable earnings.
- Mark Box 5 on the “Employer Response” form, and note the premium amount.
- Return the “Employer Response” form to DCS.

### **No medical insurance offered:**

- Mark Box 2 or 3 on the “Employer Response” form and return the form to DCS within 20 business days after the date of the Notice.

### **Removing Children from the Insurance Coverage:**

- DCS sends a written Release when the employee is no longer obligated to provide medical insurance for the children.
- The Release means the employer does not have to enroll, or keep the children on the plan(s), if the employee chooses to drop them from coverage.
- Do not remove the children from the insurance plan(s) unless told to do so by the employee. The employee may want to keep the children on the insurance plan(s) voluntarily.
- The employer can remove the children from the insurance plan(s) without a release when the children no longer meet the eligibility rules of the plan(s).
- Tell DCS when children are removed from coverage or are moved to a new insurance carrier.

### **For More Information about Medical Insurance Enforcement and Enrollment**

- Visit our website [https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/faq?field\\_topic\\_value=childmedical](https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/faq?field_topic_value=childmedical)
- See Topic: National Medical Support Notice
- See Topic: Medical Q & A
- Call the DCS field office that sent you the NMSN

Law: 45 CFR 302.80, 45 CFR 303.30, 45 CFR 303.31, 45 CFR 303.32, RCW 26.09.105, RCW 26.18.180, RCW 26.18.170, RCW 26.23.050(5), WAC 388-14A-3125, WAC 388-14A-4100 through 4175, RCW 48.01.235



# Employer Authorization Agreement for Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) of Child Support Payments

Written authorization is not needed for Internet [www.dcsonline.dshs.wa.gov](http://www.dcsonline.dshs.wa.gov). Use for ACH Credit Authorization or Repetitive Debit Authorization

Business Name	FEIN	Date of first payment (optional)
Contact Person	Title	Phone
Mailing Address	Email Address	
City	State	Zip

## EFT Options:

ACH Credit with Addenda  
 CCD+  CTX

The Washington State Division of Child Support (DCS) is hereby requested to grant authority for the above named business to initiate ACH CREDIT transactions to the DCS bank account for child support payments. DCS bank account information will be sent to you upon receipt of this form. \*\*Authorization is NOT granted for DEBIT entries to the DCS bank account.

Signature	Title	Date
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## For Repetitive Debits, complete this section:

ACH Debit (Repetitive-DCS Initiated)  
Number of Employees   
Date(s) of Payment  (Dates of the month – must be numeric)  
Attach detailed listing with name, social security number and amount for each employee.

The Washington State Division of Child Support is hereby authorized to initiate debit entries to the bank account identified below, and the bank is authorized to debit such account. This authority is to remain in effect until mutual agreement between the Employer and DCS.

Signature	Title	Date
Bank Name		
Branch Address		Branch Telephone
ABA Routing Number	Account Number (Please attach a voided check for verification.)	





PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE



DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT EFT  
PO BOX 9010  
OLYMPIA WA 98507-9010

Please fold in half and tape shut. **Do not staple.**

TAPE  
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*Washington State*  
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DSHS 22-709 (Rev. 6/15)

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