

Administrative Policy No: 19.70.63

Subject: Garnishments, Writs, Wage Assignments, Child Support, and Levies for Providers and Vendors

Information Contact: Office of Accounting Services
Chief, (360) 664-5716

Authorizing Source: State Administration & Accounting Manual (SAAM): [25.60](#)
Garnishments and Levies

Effective Date: April 1, 2016

Revised: September 23, 2020

Approved By: Original signed by Judy Fitzgerald
Assistant Secretary / Chief Financial Officer

Purpose

This policy establishes the Department of Social and Health Services' (DSHS) policies and procedures for garnishments, writs, wage assignments, child support, and levies for providers and vendors.

Scope

This policy applies to all department programs that pay for services through Agency Financial Reporting System (AFRS), Social Service Payment System (SSPS), IPOne, and ProviderOne.

Additional Guidance

IRS [Publication 15](#), (circular E) Employer's Tax Guide

IRS [Publication 926](#), Household Employers Tax Guide

Definitions

Agency financial reporting system (AFRS) is the state of Washington's official accounting system.

Department refers to the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

Electronic income withholding Orders (e-IWO) is the electronic system that allows employers to take care of the following child support matters:

- Receive income withholding orders (IWOs)

- Acknowledge acceptance or rejection of IWOs
- Notify the child support agencies of employee terminations
- Inform child support agencies of lump sum and bonus payments

Garnishment or levy is used to capture all or a portion of earnings or personal property owed by a state agency to an employee, vendor, or third party. Personal property can include, but is not limited to, wages, leave buyout, vendor payments, commissions, bonuses, or prize money. The documents used to capture such amounts include, but are not limited to, writs of garnishment, mandatory wage assignments, mandatory payroll deductions, court orders, levies and other administrative orders.

IPOne is the payment subsystem of the Washington state medicaid management information system (MMIS), ProviderOne, used to capture reporting of hours worked by individual providers providing in-home care services and process payroll.

Program is the affected DSHS program, including the division, office, or staff designated by the assistant secretary or chief officer as being responsible for compliance with this policy.

Provider is any individual, medical professional, paraprofessional, or business that delivers individual medical care services or personal care services to a DSHS client, and is paid by DSHS. A provider's tax reportable payments are reported on an IRS form 1099, 1042 or W2 depending on the type of services provided.

ProviderOne is the official Washington state medicaid management information system (MMIS) payment system owned by Health Care Authority (HCA) used to pay providers.

Social service payment system (SSPS) is a payment system owned by the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) that is used by DSHS to pay providers.

Vendor is any person, business, non-profit, or government entity who provides goods or services to DSHS or its clients. A vendor may or may not have a contractual agreement.

Policy

- A. The Office of Accounting Services (OAS) Tax and Garnishment Unit, is responsible for complying with garnishments, writs, wage assignments, child support, and levies served on DSHS for providers and vendors of DSHS.**

OAS responsibilities include:

1. Establishing policies and procedures for the handling of garnishments, writs, wage assignments, child support, and levies.
2. Processing all garnishments, writs, wage assignments, child support, and levies except for providers paid by IPOne or DCYF SSPS.

3. Forwarding all DCYF SSPS provider garnishments, writs, wage assignments, child support, and levies to DCYF.
4. Forwarding all IPOne garnishments, wage assignments, levies, and child support to IPOne. For all IPOne writs received, the OAS tax and garnishment unit will respond with a non-garnishment letter.

B. The OAS tax and garnishment unit serves as the department's point of contact for receiving all garnishments, writs, wage assignments, child support, and levies for SSPS, AFRS, IPOne, and ProviderOne providers and vendors.

1. If DSHS staff receive a garnishment, writ, wage assignments, child support, or levy for a provider or vendor, they are to forward the item to OAS.
2. All writs must be received from the Attorney General's Office (AGO) prior to being processed.

Procedures

A. To process garnishments, writs, wage assignments, child support, and levies:

1. If writs are received directly from the courts by DSHS staff, they are to be sent to the OAS tax and garnishment unit. The OAS tax and garnishment unit will send an improper serve letter to the court instructing them to send the writ to the AGO.
2. The OAS tax and garnishment unit will review all garnishments, writs, wage assignments, and levies to determine which payment system is paying the provider or vendor.
3. With the exception of child support and writs, OAS will forward to IPOne all garnishments, wage assignments, and levies on providers with non-exempt payments that are paid through IPOne for collection. Child support notices are sent electronically to IPOne by the e-IWO system. Writs will be responded to with a non-garnishment letter sent to the issuer of the writ.
4. With the exception of child support, OAS will forward to DCYF SSPS all garnishments, writs, wage assignments, and levies on DCYF providers with non-exempt payments that are paid through SSPS for collection. Child support notices are sent electronically to SSPS by the e-IWO system.
5. The OAS tax and garnishment unit will process all other garnishments, writs, wage assignments, child support, and levies on providers and vendors with non-exempt payments paid through SSPS, AFRS, and ProviderOne.

6. The OAS Tax and Garnishment Unit will return all garnishments, writs, wage assignments, and levies on providers and vendors with payments exempt from garnishments to the sender notifying them of the exemption.

DSHS Official