

Dauphin County



Domestic Relations

Mailing address:

Dauphin County Domestic Relations Office
P.O. Box 1295
Harrisburg, PA 17108

Location:

Human Services Building
25 South Front Street, 8th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101

(717) 255-2796

Fax (717) 780-6849

Judge Jeannine Turgeon

Court of Common Pleas

Kim S. Robison

Director, Domestic Relations Office

Important Disclosure and Notice

This booklet was prepared by the Domestic Relations Office of the Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas for informational purposes only. The information contained herein should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion on any specific fact or circumstance. Readers should not act upon this information without seeking professional legal counsel.

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INTRODUCTION

The Domestic Relations Office is a division of the Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas. This booklet explains the Domestic Relations Office rules and procedures. Although we have other duties, the Domestic Relations Office is primarily responsible for working with families to establish and enforce support orders for children and spouses.

The Domestic Relations Office is comprised of Judges, Administrators, a Director, an Assistant Director, Managers, Supervisors, an Attorney, *Conference Officers*, *Enforcement Officers*, and various technical and clerical staff.

The Pennsylvania Child Support Enforcement System (*PACSES*) is a statewide automated computer system that tracks support cases and keeps financial records. *PACSES* also provides tools to enforce support orders.

Domestic Relations employees are trained to provide clients with information concerning support. **Domestic Relations non-lawyer employees are not permitted or licensed to provide legal advice. You should always seek professional legal advice for your case.**

A Domestic Relations *Conference Officer* computes the amount of support based upon the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Support Guidelines, unless the parties can reach an agreement.

More detailed information about the Pa. Support Guidelines is available at www.supportguidelines.com/main.html .

All words in *italics* are explained in the “Definitions of Terms” at the end of this booklet.

CONTACTING THE DOMESTIC RELATIONS OFFICE

The Domestic Relations Office is located in the Dauphin County Human Services Building, 25 South Front Street, 8th Floor, Harrisburg, PA.

The mailing address is:

Dauphin County Domestic Relations Office
P.O. Box 1295
Harrisburg, PA 17108

TELEPHONE, FAX, AND WEBSITE

Telephone Number: (717) 255-2796. To access computer information on the Interactive Voice Response System, you must have touch tone service.

Fax Number: (717) 780-6849 or (717) 780-6848

Website: www.dauphincounty.org (found under “Court Department”)

Child support website: www.childsupport.state.pa.us

You may call or appear at the Domestic Relations Office to meet with a Client Service Representative about your support case at any time Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (excluding holidays). We recommend calling or writing a letter asking to schedule an appointment. Walk-in clients may experience a longer waiting time.

When contacting the office about an existing support case, you will be required to supply your Domestic Relations docket number, Social Security number, and *PACSES* member ID or *case number* (your *PACSES case number* is on all correspondence sent by the Domestic Relations Office and *PA State Collection Disbursement Unit (PA SCDU)*).

Information concerning your case will not be given to any third parties (spouse, girlfriend, boyfriend, parent, child (ren), friend, relative, neighbor, etc.). Case information will only be given to the *plaintiff*, *defendant*, *defendant’s* employer, attorney of record, power of attorney, or any authorized governmental agency.

Please do not telephone or write to any Judge about your case. Judges do not give advice, discuss cases, or take action on a case as a result of letters or telephone calls.

LEGAL REPRESENTATION

In all matters before the Domestic Relations Office, you have a right to have an attorney represent you.

If you need legal representation, you may contact:

Lawyer Referral Service
Dauphin County Bar Association Building
213 North Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
(717) 232-7536

Mid Penn Legal Services
213-A North Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
(717) 232-0581

PALawHELP.org
www.PALawHELP.org

+

Harrisburg Civil Law Clinic at Widener
(717) 541-0320

Legal counsel, through the Domestic Relations Office, is available to all *plaintiffs* and minor defendants.

Federal law requires Domestic Relations legal counsel to also protect the Commonwealth's interests. Legal counsel will routinely evaluate each case for conflicts between the Agency's interests and the plaintiff's interests. Should such a conflict arise, the plaintiff will be promptly notified.

The Dauphin County Domestic Relations Office charges the following fees:

<i>COMPLAINT</i> FOR SUPPORT.....	NO FEE
MODIFICATION or TERMINATION PETITION.....	\$ 15.00
REINSTATEMENT.....	\$ 15.00
<i>APPEAL</i>	\$ 15.00
DRO ACCOUNT AUDITS.....	\$ 30.00
PIN NUMBER CHANGES.....	\$ 5.00
<i>LIEN</i> CERTIFICATE.....	\$ 15.00
<i>PACSES</i> STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT (COMPUTER PRINTOUT).....	\$ 5.00
COPIES.....	\$ 0.50 per page

The Domestic Relations Office does not accept personal checks.

All fees or *purge monies* paid to the Domestic Relations Office must be cash, money order, or certified check, payable to Domestic Relations Office. Include your name, *PACSES* case or member number with all payments.

WHAT IS SUPPORT

“Support” is the amount of financial assistance paid for the basic needs of one’s child (ren) and/or spouse. Support may include two separate financial obligations - child support and *spousal support*. The amount of support is based upon the guidelines.

TYPES OF SUPPORT

Child Support - court ordered support for dependent child (ren).

Spousal Support - court ordered support for a spouse if the *parties* (*defendant/plaintiff*) are married, but separated.

Alimony Pendente Lite (APL) - court ordered temporary support for a spouse when a divorce action is pending.

Alimony - court ordered support (former spouse) after a divorce decree is entered.

Medical Insurance Coverage - court ordered medical insurance for one’s child (ren) and/or spouse.

Other Expenses - court ordered support may include other expenses such as, mortgage, educational, extracurricular activities, medical, psychological counseling, medical and dental insurance, day care, and such other expenses deemed appropriate by the Court.

WHO MAY FILE FOR SUPPORT

Pennsylvania law provides that when a child (ren) resides with a parent, adult, or agency, that person or agency may file a *complaint* for support against the *non-custodial parent(s)* or spouse. Both parents have a legal obligation to support their child (ren). A married person may be required to financially support their spouse pending their divorce (*alimony pendente lite* or *spousal support*) and after their divorce (*alimony*).

The most important factor in determining a support obligation is the *net income* or *earning capacity* of each party (see page 16 - Monthly *net income*). A parent is legally obligated to support their child (ren) until emancipation, generally their eighteenth birthday or graduation from high school (whichever occurs last). A parent is legally obligated to pay child support for any disabled child through adulthood. Parents are also required to pay child support when their child(ren) has been placed in a facility outside of the home by the Court in a juvenile court proceeding or dependency proceeding (such as Dauphin County Children and Youth Services). In those instances, both parents are obligated to pay child support based upon the *Guideline Chart* (see page 28).

ESTABLISHING A SUPPORT ORDER

To establish a support case, a *plaintiff* must file a *complaint* in the Domestic Relations Office. It is generally requested that the *plaintiff* personally appear at the Domestic Relations Office and meet with a Client Service Representative to complete, sign, and file a formal *complaint* for support (no filing fee).

When a *plaintiff* files a *complaint* for support, he/she should always bring as much as possible of the following information to the Domestic Relations Office:

1. Valid photo identification.
2. The Social Security cards or numbers for both parents/*parties* and child (ren).
3. Current addresses for both parents/*parties*.
4. The date of birth for both parents/*parties* and child (ren).
5. Paystubs and places of employment (address and phone number) for both parents/*parties*.
6. Driver's license number of the *defendant*.
7. Medical insurance cards for both parents/*parties* and child (ren). Also, include documentation for any extraordinary medical expenses or conditions.
8. A photograph of the *defendant*.
9. Birth certificate(s) of the child (ren).
10. Marriage license, if married to the *defendant*.
11. Divorce decree, if divorced from the *defendant*.
12. Any Protection from Abuse Order between the *parties*.
13. Any support orders issued in any other state or county.

When filing a complaint for support at the Domestic Relations Office, a Client Service Representative will meet with the *plaintiff* and prepare a support *complaint* based on the information supplied. A *plaintiff* should expect to spend about an hour in the Domestic Relations Office. After the support *complaint* is filed, a support *conference* will be scheduled with a Domestic Relations *Conference Officer* generally within 30 - 45 days.

A *plaintiff* may also hire an attorney to prepare and file a *complaint* for support on his/her behalf.

Third parties are not permitted to attend conferences, they must wait in our main waiting room.

To assist in filing for support a video can be accessed at www.DauphinCounty.org, Government Services, Court Departments, Self Help Center, Navigating the Child Support Process.

E-Services

Another option to begin the process for child or spousal support is online through E-Services. Go to www.childsupport.state.pa.us, Click on "Request Support Services, and follow the prompts. After completion, contact our office and speak to a Client Service Representative.

INTRASTATE and INTERGOVERNMENTAL CASES

A *plaintiff* who resides in Dauphin County may file a support action here even if the *defendant* lives in another county (*intrastate*) or in another state (*intergovernmental*). Support actions are enforceable across county and state lines.

Enforcement of a support order is usually handled by the county support office where the *defendant* lives. Therefore, a *plaintiff* may choose to file in the county where the *defendant* lives. It may be more efficient to keep management of the entire case in one county. A Client Service Representative will assist in determining where it is best to file a support *complaint*.

When a *plaintiff* files a support action in another county or state, it is not necessary for the *plaintiff* to travel there to file the *complaint*. The Dauphin County Domestic Relations Office will forward the *complaint* for filing to the other support office which will schedule the support *conference* and establish a support order. The *plaintiff* is not required to personally attend the *conference* in the other county or state and can participate via telephone at the Dauphin County Domestic Relations Office. The other support office may also provide an attorney to represent the *plaintiff* at those proceedings.

The Dauphin County Domestic Relations Office has no control over an office in another county or state. We will: (1) prepare and send a support *complaint* to the other county or state; (2) respond to all questions received from the other county or state; (3) provide the *plaintiff* copies of all notices and orders received from the other county or state, including *conference* and *hearing* notices and court orders; and (4) make periodic contacts with the other county or state to keep track of the case. Once a support order has been entered, the other county or state is responsible to collect and enforce the support obligation, as long as the *defendant* resides there.

LOCATING THE DEFENDANT

The law requires that all *parties* must be served with notice of the support action at their last known address so that they are provided an opportunity to appear and participate in their support *conference* or court *hearing*. If a *plaintiff* does not know where the *defendant* resides, a Client Service Representative will provide some assistance. The Domestic Relations Office uses a variety of sources to try to locate the *defendant*, including but not limited to the internet, driver's license records, credit bureau reports, public assistance information, employment information, lottery records, and the federal and state directories of new hires. Therefore, it is very important that the *plaintiff* provides the *defendant's* full name, birth date, Social Security number, and other information listed on page 12.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

If a *plaintiff* or *defendant* is experiencing or concerned about domestic violence issues, they should notify the Domestic Relations Office prior to the *conference* or *hearing* or at any time during the life of the support case. In these circumstances, the *plaintiff* or *defendant* should also contact the below available agencies for counseling and support services:

Victim Witness Assistance Program
Human Services Building, 7th floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101
888-292-9611

YWCA
1101 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17103
1-800-654-1211

Lawyer Referral Services
Dauphin County Bar Association Bldg.
213 North Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
(717) 232-7536

Mid Penn Legal Services
213-A North Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
(717) 232-0581

SUPPORT CONFERENCE AND HEARING

Once a support *complaint* has been filed, notice of the time and date of the *conference* as well as income and expense forms are mailed to both *parties*. Requests for wage statements are mailed to both *parties'* employers. *Parties* should arrive at the Domestic Relations Office **at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled time of the *conference* with completed income and expense forms.** The *plaintiff* and *defendant*, along with their attorneys, are the only *parties* permitted to attend the *conference*. Depending upon individual circumstances, even if one party fails to appear, the *conference* may proceed. The *conference* may last up to one hour.

To assist in understanding the support conference a video can be accessed at www.DauphinCounty.org, Government Services, Court Departments, Self Help Center, Navigating the Child Support Process.

DOCUMENTS TO BRING TO THE CONFERENCE

Both *parties* will be ordered to bring the following to the *conference*:

1. Previous years' income tax returns.
2. Past six months' payroll stubs.
3. Medical insurance cards, policy numbers, and benefit booklets.
4. Self-employed *clients* must bring business records, financial statements, and past two years' tax returns.
5. Unemployed *clients* must bring Unemployment, Workers' Compensation, Disability, Social Security Income (SSI), *Social*

- Security Disability (SSD)* or pension benefits information.
6. Completed income and expense statements.
 7. Documentation for any other expenses which *plaintiff* seeks financial assistance in addition to the monthly support amount, such as:
 - a. Day care bill or invoice statement and paid receipt.
 - b. Mortgage contribution.
 - c. Uninsured medical/dental, counseling expenses.
 - d. Private school, summer camp, extracurricular expenses.
 - e. Necessary reasonable tutoring or enrichment educational class expenses.
 - f. Expenses for special needs child (ren) and any necessary supporting documentation.
 - g. Extraordinary fixed expenses.
 - h. Proof of payments defendants made directly to the *plaintiff* or provider.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE CONFERENCE

In Pennsylvania, child, *spousal support*, and APL orders are based upon the most recent Pa. Support Guidelines adopted by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. The Pa. Support Guidelines published in the Pa. Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 1910, are available at any law library or at www.supportguidelines.com/main.html . The 2017 *Guideline Chart* is reproduced on page 28 of this booklet.

A Domestic Relations *Conference Officer* presides over the support *conference*. The purpose of the *conference* is to determine the *net income* or *earning capacity* of each party in order to compute the proper support order under the Pa. Support Guidelines (see definitions below). If the *plaintiff* provided the *defendant's* accurate employment information, the *Conference Officer* may have the *defendant's* salary (income) statement from the employer(s). The amount of support a party is required to pay is based primarily on both *parties'* net monthly incomes or *earning capacity*, plus their proportionate share of day care costs, mortgage expenses exceeding 25% of the *plaintiff's net income* (if *parties* have a marital residence), health insurance, and any other recurring expenses set forth above. An additional amount towards unpaid support *arrears* will also be added to the monthly support order.

The *Guideline Chart* determines the starting point for support orders based upon the *parties'* monthly *net income* or *earning capacity*:

1. **Income** - Monthly gross income is based upon at least a six-month average of a parent's income. The term "income" includes income from any source, including but not limited to: (see 23 Pa.C.S.A. §4302)
 - a. Wages, salaries, bonuses, fees, and commissions
 - b. Income from a business, rental income, or sale of property;
 - c. Interest, royalties, and dividends;

- d. Pensions and all forms of retirement;
 - e. Income from an interest in an estate or trust
 - f. *Social Security Disability (SSD)* benefits, Social Security retirement benefits, temporary and permanent disability benefits, Workers' Compensation, and Unemployment Compensation;
 - g. *Alimony*;
 - h. Other entitlement to money or lump sum awards, without regard to source, including lottery winnings; income tax refunds; insurance compensation or settlements; awards and verdicts; and any form of payment due to and collectible by an individual regardless of source. (DHS cash assistance and SSI are not considered as income for child support computation purposes.)
2. **Monthly net income** - This is determined by averaging the monthly gross income or monthly *earning capacity* subtracting *mandatory deductions*. *Mandatory deductions* include, but are not limited to, federal, state, and local taxes, F.I.C.A deductions, mandatory retirement contributions, and union dues. *Mandatory deductions* do not include payroll deductions for insurance, child support payments, loan repayments, voluntary retirement contributions, and savings.
 3. **Fluctuating (changing) income** - Adjustments in support orders will not be made for minor changes in income. The *net income* of seasonal employees or *parties* with several employers is usually based on an average of the last one to three years' *net incomes* or *earning capacity*.
 4. **Earning capacity** - A parent may be held to the highest salary they have earned during their employment history or are capable of earning based on their education, training, experience, and ability to work to support their child(ren) or spouse. If a party is able to work and chooses a lower paying job, does not work a full forty hours per week, or fails to work at all, they may be held to have an income equal to their *earning capacity*. This also applies when a party voluntarily quits work or is fired for misconduct. When assessing an *earning capacity*, a reasonable work regimen depends upon all relevant circumstances including the choice of jobs available within a particular occupation, working hours, working conditions, and whether a party has demonstrated substantial good faith efforts to find suitable employment.
 5. **Retroactive effect** - Support orders are effective retroactive to the date the support *complaint* or petition for modification was filed. Support orders will include an additional payment towards these *arrears* in addition to the monthly support amount. Credit may be given for voluntary payments made between the filing date and the date of the support order to the plaintiff or a creditor. Absent an agreement, proof of such payments is required. However, voluntary payments to a *plaintiff* receiving DHS cash benefits cannot be credited towards *arrears*.
 6. **Deviation factors** – Child support is based upon the *Guideline Chart*. In rare circumstances, if justified, the child support *Guideline Chart* amount

may be adjusted based upon certain deviation factors such as: unusual needs, failure to exercise partial custody/visitation with the child(ren), extraordinary fixed financial obligations, other support obligations, other household income, children's ages, *parties'* relative assets and liabilities, unusually large uninsured medical expenses, standard of living, and best interests of the child(ren). In a spousal support or *APL* case, the duration of the marriage may be a factor from the date of marriage to the date of final separation.

7. **Marital residence mortgage payment** - The Pa. Support Guidelines assume that the parent or spouse who is living in the marital residence (the family home) will be solely responsible for the mortgage payment, real estate taxes, and homeowner's insurance. If the *plaintiff*/spouse is living in the marital residence and the mortgage payment exceeds 25 percent of the *plaintiff's*/spouse's *net income* (including the amount of *spousal support*, *APL*, and child support), the Court may direct the *defendant* to assume up to 50 percent of the excess amount as part of the total support order.
8. **Child care** - Reasonable child care costs are the responsibility of both parents. The Pa. Support Guidelines require the parents to pay their proportionate share based on their *net income*.
9. **Private school/summer camp/extracurricular expenses** - The *Guideline Chart* amount does not consider the costs of private school tuition, tutoring, private lessons, summer camp, extracurricular activities, etc. If these expenses are reasonable and necessary, the support order may include this amount or order the *defendant* to pay their proportionate share either the *plaintiff* or directly to the provider of these services.
10. ***Defendant's* substantial shared custody** - The *Guideline Chart* assumes that the *defendant* has normal visitation (shared physical custody) with their child(ren) (every other weekend, one night a week, summer vacations, and holidays) and that the *defendant* pays for the child's expenses during those custodial periods. If a *defendant* has "substantial shared custody" (child spends more than 40% of overnights with the *defendant*), an adjustment to the *Guideline Chart* amount will be made under the Rules (see page 20)
11. **Medical/dental/counseling expenses** – The law requires that parents provide support for their child(ren) including medical insurance, if available at a reasonable cost, plus pay any uninsured expenses. Therefore, a support order may require one or both parents to have medical insurance for the child(ren)/spouse and to pay their proportionate share of the insurance. Medical expenses include insurance co-payments and deductibles and all expenses incurred for reasonably necessary medical services and supplies, including but not limited to surgical, dental, orthodontic, optic, psychiatric, psychological or mental health counseling if court ordered. Medical expenses do not include cosmetic or chiropractic services unless specifically directed in the court order.
Standard support orders provide that the *defendant* is responsible for unreimbursed medical expenses in excess of \$250 per person per year. In

- the year in which the initial support order is entered, the \$250 threshold is prorated. After the first year, the expenses are calculated on a calendar year basis. See page 42 for the unreimbursed medical expenses process.
12. **College expenses for adult child(ren)** - College support for adult child(ren) cannot be court ordered absent a *defendant's* verbal or written agreement. If the parents are paying college expenses for a child, this may warrant deviating upward or downward to the standard support amount under the *Guideline Chart*.
 13. **Welfare recipient** - A person who is a recipient of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) from the Department of Human Services (DHS) for a child(ren) is required to file a *complaint* for support for the child(ren). A recipient of TANF benefits is required to file a complaint for support for themselves (*spousal support*) if they are married, but currently separated from their spouse. The recipient must assign (give over) their rights for support to DHS. DHS cash assistance is not considered income for child support computation purposes. If the support order is higher than the total DHS benefits received by the *plaintiff*, the *plaintiff* and child(ren) may no longer receive DHS cash benefits. Any support *arrears* owed by the *defendant* to DHS may be owed to DHS by the *defendant* at the time the *plaintiff* takes themselves and/or the child(ren) off their grant.
 14. **Social Security Income and Social Security Disability Income** - For purposes of calculating child(ren) and/or *spousal support* orders, income received by a *party* in the form of SSI benefits is not considered income. This is distinguished from SSD benefits which is “income” (see page 26 for further information on SSD).

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF HOW TO COMPUTE A CHILD SUPPORT ORDER

NOTE: This is merely a general overview of support calculations. Please contact a lawyer familiar with support law to review all applicable statutes, court rules, and case law. The Pa. Rules of Civil Procedure 1910.16 can be found in your local law library or at www.supportguidelines.com/main.html .

Part I:

A blank basic child support calculation formula is on page 54 for your own calculations.

Add each *parties' net incomes/earning capacities* on the form to compute the parents' combined *net incomes*. Then, insert the basic child support obligation from the *Guideline Chart* (see page 28), add any prorated relevant adjustments for substantial shared custody (over 40% overnights), extraordinary necessary expenses, child care, school tuition, health premiums, or other relevant deviating factors. To determine the *non-custodial parent's pro rata* share, divide *net income* by the *parties' combined incomes*.

AN EXAMPLE OF A BASIC CHILD SUPPORT CALCULATION

The following is a basic support guideline calculation example: A *plaintiff* files a *complaint* for support requesting child support for two (2) children and *spousal support*. The *plaintiff's* monthly gross income is \$1,000 and the *defendant's* monthly gross income is \$2,000. The *defendant* has *mandatory deductions* of \$400 per month and the *plaintiff* has *mandatory deductions* of \$118 per month. To compute the monthly *net income* for both the *defendant* and *plaintiff*, subtract line 3 from line 2. Their combined monthly *net income* is \$2,482. To compute the basic child support obligation using the combined *parties' monthly net income* (\$2,482 would be rounded up to \$2,500), go to the *Guideline Chart* for two (2) children and follow that down until you reach \$2,500. The \$849 indicates the basic monthly support obligation of both parents for their children's basic needs (food, clothing, and shelter). Divide line 5 (combined monthly *net income*) into line 4 (monthly income) to determine each parents' proportionate child support responsibility. Multiply line 8 (basic child support) by line 11 (parent's percentage share) to arrive at each parent's share of basic child support on line 12.

	<i>Defendant</i>	<i>Plaintiff</i>
1. Number of Dependents in this case	0	2
2. Total Gross Monthly Income	<u>\$2,000</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>
3. Subtract Monthly Deductions	<u>\$400</u>	<u>\$118</u>
4. Monthly <i>Net Income</i> (subtract line 3 from line 2)	<u>\$1,600</u>	<u>\$882</u>
5. Combined Total Monthly <i>Net Income</i> (add both totals on line 4)	<u>\$2,482</u>	
6. Monthly Social Security Benefits for Child(ren) (see Rule 1910.16-2(b)(2))	<u>\$0</u>	
7. Adjusted Combined Monthly <i>Net Income</i> (add line 5 and line 6)	<u>\$2,482</u>	
8. Basic Child Support Obligation (use chart on the next pages; find number of children and combined monthly income on line 7)	<u>\$849</u>	
9. Less Monthly Social Security Benefit for Child(ren)	<u>\$0</u>	
10. Basic Child Support Obligation (subtract line 9 from line 8)	<u>\$849</u>	
11. <i>Net Income</i> as Percentage of Combined Income (divide <i>defendant's</i> line 4 by line 5 and then <i>plaintiff's</i> line 4 by line 5)	<u>64%</u>	<u>36%</u>
12. Each Parent's Monthly Share of the Basic Child Support Obligation (multiply line 10 and <i>defendant's</i> line 11 and then line 10 and <i>plaintiff's</i> line 11)	<u>\$543.36</u>	<u>\$305.64</u>

PART II. SUBSTANTIAL SHARED PHYSICAL CUSTODY ADJUSTMENT, IF APPLICABLE (see subdivision (c) of Rule 1910.16-4)

When the child(ren) spends 40% or more overnights during the year with the *defendant*, the *defendant* is entitled to a reduction calculated pursuant to a formula. If the child spends 40% of overnights, the obligation is reduced by 10%. (If the child spends 45% of overnights, the obligation is reduced by 15%; if the child spends 50% of overnights, the obligation is reduced by 20%.)

In the above example, the *defendant* is responsible for 64% of the total basic child support obligation (line 11). However, since the *defendant* has custody of the children 40% of overnights, the support obligation is reduced by 10%. The *defendant* therefore is responsible for 54% (instead of 64%) of the total basic child support obligation, resulting in a child support obligation of \$458.46 per month, based upon the following computation:

13 a.	Percentage of Time Spent with Children (<i>defendant</i>) (divide number of custodial overnights with <i>defendant</i> by 365 and multiply by 100)	40%
b.	Subtract 30%	30%
c.	<i>Defendant's</i> Adjusted Percentage Share of the Basic Monthly Support Obligation	10%
d.	<i>Defendant's</i> Adjusted Share of the Basic Monthly Support Obligation (multiply line 13c and line 10)	\$84.90
e.	Further adjustment, if necessary under subdivision (c)(2) of Rule 1910.16-4	0

PART III. ADDITIONAL EXPENSES (see Rule 1910.16-6)

Reasonable child care expenses, health insurance premiums, unreimbursed medical expenses, private school tuition, summer camps, or other additional expenses paid by either parent are allocated between the parents in proportion to their *net incomes*. Additional expenses are listed on page 17/18.

In the example, the children's private school tuition expense is \$130 per month. Based upon each parent's *pro rata* obligation (line 11), the *defendant* must pay \$83.20 per month for school tuition expenses. Note: In computing child care, adjustments are made on the total expenses using the federal child care tax credits.

The *defendant's* share of the additional expenses (line 14f) is added to the adjusted basic monthly child support order of \$458.46 (line 13d) to compute the *defendant's* total monthly child support obligation (line 15).

14 a.	<i>Defendant's</i> Share of Child Care Expenses	\$0
b.	<i>Defendant's</i> Share of Health Insurance Premium (if the <i>plaintiff</i> is paying the premium)	\$0
c.	Less <i>Plaintiff's</i> Share of the Health Insurance Premium (if the <i>defendant</i> is paying the premium)	\$0
d.	<i>Defendant's</i> Share of Unreimbursed Medical Expenses	\$0
e.	Other Additional Expenses (tuition, extracurricular activities, etc.)	\$83.20
f.	Total Additional Expenses (add line 14 a - e)	\$83.20
15.	<i>Defendant's</i> Total Monthly Support Obligation (add <i>defendant's</i> line 12 or line 13d or e (if applicable) and line 14f)	\$541.66

Part IV: SPOUSAL SUPPORT

Spousal support is based on 30% or 40% of the difference in the *parties' net incomes*. If the *defendant* has a child support obligation or an *alimony* obligation to a former spouse, *spousal support* is computed by multiplying 30% by the difference between their *net incomes* and 40% if the *defendant* has no child support or other *alimony* obligations (Pa. R.C.P 1910.16).

If the *plaintiff's net income* is greater than the *defendant's net income*, no *spousal support* is awarded.

If a *plaintiff* files a *spousal support* action in the Domestic Relations Office, legal entitlement defenses may be raised by the *defendant*. Under the law, a *defendant* has no *spousal support* obligation if the *plaintiff*/spouse left their marital residence “without cause” or if the *plaintiff* engaged in marital misconduct which justified the *defendant's* separation from the *plaintiff*. These are legal issues about which you should seek advice from an attorney.

Part V: DEFENDANT WITHOUT DEPENDENT CHILDREN OR ALIMONY OBLIGATION

If a *plaintiff* files a *complaint* for *spousal support* or *APL* against a *defendant* who has no dependent children with the *plaintiff* or in any other cases and no *alimony* obligation to a prior spouse, the *spousal support* order will be computed as 40% of the net difference between the *parties' net incomes*. (If the *plaintiff's net income* is greater than that of the *defendant*, no *APL* or *spousal support* is awarded.)

Therefore, assume the *plaintiff's* monthly net income is \$1,000 and the *defendant's* monthly net income is \$2,000. The basic computation for such a case is as follows:

<i>Defendant's net income</i> (monthly)	\$ 2,000
Subtract <i>plaintiff's net income</i> (monthly)	- \$ <u>1,000</u>
Difference between <i>defendant's</i> and <i>plaintiff's net incomes</i>	\$ <u>1,000</u>
Multiply by 40%	x 40%
Monthly <i>spousal support</i> obligation	\$ 400

Part VI: DEFENDANT WITH ALIMONY OBLIGATION AND/OR CHILD SUPPORT FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN

If a *plaintiff* files for *spousal support* against a *defendant* who also has child support obligations or an *alimony* obligation to a prior spouse, the *spousal support* order will be computed as 30% of the net difference between the *parties' net incomes*. Therefore, assuming the *plaintiff's* monthly net income is \$1,000 and *defendant's* monthly net income is \$2,000, plus a monthly child support obligation of \$250, and an *alimony* obligation of \$250 per month, the computation is as follows:

Monthly *Spousal Support* Obligation Computations:

<i>Defendant's net income</i> (monthly)	\$ 2,000
Subtract <i>defendant's</i> child support obligations	-\$ 250
Subtract <i>defendant's alimony</i> obligations to former spouse(s)	- \$ <u>250</u>
<i>Defendant's net income</i> less those obligations	\$ 1,500
Subtract <i>plaintiff's net income</i> (monthly)	- \$ <u>1,000</u>
Difference between <i>defendant's net income</i> less child support and <i>alimony</i> obligations and <i>plaintiff's net income</i> (monthly)	\$ <u>500</u>
Multiply by 30%	x 30%
Monthly <i>spousal support</i>	\$ 150

Part VII: CUSTODIAL PARENT IS THE DEFENDANT IN A SPOUSAL SUPPORT CASE

When a *plaintiff* files for *spousal support* against their spouse with whom their children are residing, the Pa. Support Guideline amount of *spousal support* or *APL* is computed differently. The *spousal support* award is based upon the difference between the *plaintiff's* child support obligation to the other parent and that *custodial parent's* obligation of *spousal support* or *APL*. The net difference is awarded either

to the *non-custodial parent* as *spousal support/APL* or to the *custodial parent* as child support. The essence of this computation under the Pa. Support Guidelines is to equalize the incomes in the households.

The following example illustrates this formula. It assumes that the *parties* have two (2) children and the parent who has primary physical custody of the children has a monthly *net income* of \$2,000 and the *non-custodial parent's* monthly *net income* is \$1,000.

Step 1: Determine the initial computation for *spousal support*:

<i>Custodial parent's net income</i>	\$ 2,000
<i>Non-custodial parent's net income</i>	- <u>\$ 1,000</u>
Net difference in <i>parties' monthly net incomes</i>	\$ 1,000
Multiply by 40%	<u>x 40%</u>
Monthly <i>spousal support</i> amount	\$ 400

Step 2: Determine the *parties' adjusted net incomes* after *spousal support*:

To compute the adjusted *net incomes* of the *parties*, add the *spousal support* ordered to the *non-custodial parent's net income* and deduct the *spousal support* paid from the custodial parent's income.

<i>Custodial parent's net income</i>	\$2,000
Less monthly <i>spousal support</i> obligation	- <u>\$ 400</u>
Adjusted monthly <i>net income</i>	\$1,600

The *custodial parent's* "adjusted" *net income* is \$1,600. The *non-custodial parent's* adjusted *net income* is \$1,400 (\$1,000 + \$400 *spousal support*).

The child support obligation under the Pa. Support Guidelines is determined by combining the *parties' incomes* and applying the *parties' new proportionate percentage of net income* to the *Guideline Chart* amount, in this example as follows:

<i>Non-custodial parent's net income</i>	\$ 1,000
Plus <i>spousal support</i>	+ <u>400</u>
<i>Net income</i>	\$ 1,400
<i>Custodial parent's net income</i>	\$ 2,000
Less <i>spousal support</i>	- <u>400</u>
<i>Net income</i>	\$ 1,600

Step 3: Compute Child Support Obligation for *non-custodial parent* based upon the *parties' adjusted net income*:

Compute parents' combined adjusted *net incomes*:

<i>Non-custodial parent</i>	\$ 1,400
<i>Custodial parent</i>	+ <u>1,600</u>
<i>Parties' combined net incomes</i>	\$ 3,000

To determine the *non-custodial parent's* proportionate share, divide each parent's *net income* by the *parties'* combined incomes:

$$\$1,400 \div \$3,000 = 46.66\% (47\%)$$

$$\$1,600 \div \$3,000 = 53.33\% (53\%)$$

For all computations, round the percentage to a whole number, in other words, 46.66 is rounded up to 47% and 53.33 is rounded down to 53%.

Child support for two (2) children whose parents' combined incomes are \$3,000	\$ 1,015
<i>Non-custodial parent's pro rata income</i>	<u>x 47%</u>
<i>Non-custodial parent's child support obligation</i>	\$ 477.05

Step 4: Recomputed *spousal support* obligation of the *custodial parent* to the *non-custodial parent*:

Original <i>custodial parent's spousal support</i> obligation (Step 1)	\$ 400
<i>Non-custodial parent's child support obligation</i>	- <u>\$ 477.05</u>
<i>Non-custodial parent's child support obligation</i>	\$ 77.05

Step 5: *Alimony Pendente Lite (APL)*

APL claims may be filed in the Domestic Relations Office in addition to a *spousal support* claim.

There are no entitlement defenses to *APL* claim, as exists with *spousal support* claims (see above discussion). Typically, requests for *APL* are filed as part of a divorce *complaint* filed in the Prothonotary's Office.

APL awards have typically and historically been computed the same as *spousal support* claims, based upon 30% (*defendant* with dependent children or other *alimony* obligation) or 40% (*defendant* with no dependent children or other *alimony* obligation) of the net difference between the *parties' net incomes* (see above examples/computations of *spousal support*).

**CHILD SUPPORT CALCULATIONS FOR A CHILD IN PLACEMENT
(DEPENDENCY OR DELINQUENCY)**

Both parents are legally obligated to pay child support when their child (ren) is in placement as the result of a dependency (Children and Youth), or delinquency action (Juvenile Probation Office). The amount of the order is calculated under the Pa. Support Guidelines based upon each parent's monthly *net income*. Each parent is treated as a separate *defendant*. A parent's obligation is based upon the Pa. Support Guidelines amount without regard to the income of the other parent in these types of cases.

If the parents have other dependent children, the amount of basic child support for those child(ren) not in placement (based upon the Pa. Support Guidelines) is deducted from each parent's *net income* to calculate the child support obligation for the child(ren) in placement.

Example:

Mother and Father (both parents are *defendants* in separate actions) have three children and do not live in the same household. Mother has primary custody of the *parties'* two children and has a *net income* of \$1,500 per month. Father's monthly net income is \$3,000. Their combined monthly *net income* is \$4,500. The *parties'* third child is in placement at a juvenile detention facility or in foster care.

Father's monthly *net income* is 67% (\$3,000 divided by \$4,500) of the *parties'* combined monthly *net income*. Therefore, his basic support obligation to the mother for the two children at home under the *Guideline Chart* is \$903.83 per month ($67\% \times \$1,349 = \903.83).

Mother's monthly *net income* is 33% (\$1,500 divided by \$4,500) of *parties'* combined monthly *net incomes*. Her basic child support obligations for the two children living in her household under the *Guideline Chart* is \$445.17 ($33\% \times \$1,349 = \445.17).

Father's monthly obligation for the child in placement is computed based upon father's *net income* less his basic support obligation for his other children. In this example, the father's monthly *net income* is \$2,096.17 (\$3,000 less \$903.83 support for the children living primarily with mother). Father's support for his obligation of the child in placement is computed using 100%, under the *Guideline Chart*, at the \$2,100 income level (\$2,096.17 is rounded up to \$2,100 on the *Guideline Chart*) is \$498 per month.

Mother's monthly obligation for the child in placement is computed based upon mother's *net income* less her basic support obligation for her other children. Mother's monthly *net income* is \$1,054.83 (\$1,500 net less \$445.17 support

obligation for the children living primarily with her). Mother's support order will be 100% of the support *Guideline Chart* amount for one child at the \$1,050 income level (\$1,054.83 is rounded down to \$1,050 on the *Guideline Chart*), and is therefore \$62 per month.

**CALCULATIONS FOR CHILD SUPPORT FOR A CHILD
RECEIVING SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY PAYMENTS DUE TO THEIR
PARENT'S DEATH, DISABILITY, OR RETIREMENT**

(1) *Public Assistance and SSI Benefits.* Neither public assistance nor Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits shall be counted as income for purposes of determining support.

(2) *Social Security Derivative Benefits for a Child.*

(A) This subdivision (A) shall be applied if a child for whom support is sought is receiving Social Security derivative benefits as a result of either parent's retirement or disability.

(i) If a child for whom support is sought is receiving Social Security benefits as a result of a parent's retirement or disability, the amount of the benefit shall be added to the income of the party receiving the benefit on behalf of the child to calculate child support. Next, apportion the amount of basic child support set forth in the schedule in Rule 1910.16-3 between the parties based upon each party's percentage share of their combined net monthly income, including the child's benefit in the income of the party receiving it.

(ii) If the child's benefit is being paid to the obligee, the amount of the child's benefit shall be deducted from the basic support obligation of the party whose retirement or disability created the child's benefit. If the child's benefit is being paid to the obligor, the child's benefit shall not be deducted from the obligor's obligation, even if the obligor's retirement or disability created the child's benefit. In cases of equally shared custody, first determine which party has the higher income without the benefit, and thus is the obligor, before adding the child's benefit to the income of the party receiving it.

(iii) In cases in which the obligor is receiving the child's benefits, the domestic relations sections shall provide the parties with two calculations theoretically assigning the benefit to each household.

(iv) In allocating additional expenses pursuant to Rule 1910.16-6, the allocation shall be based upon the parties' incomes before the addition of the child's benefit to the income of the party receiving it.

(B) This subdivision (B) shall be applied when determining the support obligation of a surviving parent when the child for whom support is sought is

receiving Social Security derivative benefits as a result of the other parent's death. The income of a non-parent obligee who is caring for a child but has no support obligation to that child shall include only those funds the obligee is receiving on behalf of the child, including the Social Security derivative benefits if they are being paid to the obligee. If the benefits are being paid to the surviving parent, the amount of the benefit shall be added to that parent's income to calculate child support.

Mother's monthly *net income* is \$1,054.83 (\$1,500 net less \$445.17 support obligation for the children living primarily with her). Mother's support order will be 100% of the support *Guideline Chart* amount for one child at the \$1,050 income level (\$1,054.83 is rounded down to \$1,050 on the *Guideline Chart*), and is therefore \$62 per month.

NOTE: When computing income using the Guideline Chart, the income figures are rounded as follows:

If the calculated net income of the parties is any amount from \$1001 to \$1024 the Combined Monthly Net income Increment will be \$1000.

If the calculated net income of the parties is any amount from \$1025 to \$1049 the Combined Monthly Net income Increment will be \$1050.

If the calculated net income of the parties is any amount from \$1051 to \$1074 the Combined Monthly Net income Increment will be \$1050.

If the calculated net income of the parties is any amount from \$1075 to \$1099 the Combined Monthly Net income Increment will be \$1100.

The following *Guideline Chart* sets forth the basic starting point to establish a child support order. The figures were established on national economic studies which determine the amounts spent on children's basic needs in intact families, based on parents' combined monthly incomes and the number of children in the household. Parents' combined *net income* is listed in the first column. The number of children (for which support is sought) is set forth on the other columns.

The *Guideline Chart* is used to determine the basic combined child support obligation. The starting point for the *defendant's* share of child support is computed by using the formula set forth on page 18.

Pa. Child Support Guideline Chart
(Effective May 1, 2017)

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
1000	17	17	18	18	18	18
1050	62	63	64	64	65	66
1100	107	108	110	111	112	113
1150	152	154	156	157	159	161
1200	197	199	202	204	206	208
1250	242	245	248	250	253	256
1300	287	290	294	297	300	303
1350	325	336	340	343	347	351
1400	336	381	386	390	394	398
1450	348	427	432	436	441	446
1500	360	472	478	483	488	493
1550	372	518	524	529	535	541
1600	383	555	570	576	582	588
1650	395	571	616	622	629	636
1700	407	588	662	669	676	683
1750	418	605	708	715	723	731
1800	430	621	730	762	770	778
1850	441	638	748	808	817	826
1900	452	654	767	855	864	873
1950	464	670	786	878	911	921
2000	475	686	805	899	958	968
2050	487	703	824	920	1005	1016
2100	498	719	843	941	1035	1063
2150	509	735	861	962	1058	1111
2200	521	751	880	983	1081	1158
2250	532	768	899	1004	1105	1201
2300	543	784	918	1025	1128	1226
2350	555	800	937	1046	1151	1251
2400	566	816	956	1067	1174	1276
2450	578	832	974	1088	1197	1301
2500	589	849	993	1109	1220	1326
2550	600	865	1012	1131	1244	1352
2600	612	882	1032	1153	1268	1378
2650	623	898	1052	1175	1292	1404
2700	635	915	1071	1197	1316	1431
2750	647	932	1091	1218	1340	1457
2800	658	949	1111	1240	1364	1483

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
2850	670	965	1130	1262	1389	1509
2900	681	982	1150	1284	1413	1536
2950	693	999	1169	1306	1437	1562
3000	704	1015	1189	1328	1461	1588
3050	716	1032	1209	1350	1485	1614
3100	727	1049	1228	1372	1509	1641
3150	739	1065	1248	1394	1534	1667
3200	751	1082	1268	1416	1558	1693
3250	762	1099	1287	1438	1582	1719
3300	774	1115	1307	1460	1606	1745
3350	782	1127	1320	1475	1622	1763
3400	791	1140	1333	1489	1638	1781
3450	800	1152	1347	1504	1655	1799
3500	809	1164	1360	1519	1671	1817
3550	818	1176	1373	1534	1687	1834
3600	827	1188	1387	1549	1704	1852
3650	836	1200	1400	1564	1720	1870
3700	845	1212	1413	1579	1737	1888
3750	853	1224	1427	1594	1753	1905
3800	862	1236	1440	1608	1769	1923
3850	868	1245	1450	1620	1782	1937
3900	873	1253	1460	1630	1793	1949
3950	879	1261	1469	1641	1805	1962
4000	884	1269	1479	1652	1817	1975
4050	890	1277	1488	1662	1829	1988
4100	895	1285	1498	1673	1840	2001
4150	900	1293	1508	1684	1852	2013
4200	906	1301	1517	1695	1864	2026
4250	911	1309	1527	1705	1876	2039
4300	917	1317	1536	1716	1888	2052
4350	922	1325	1545	1726	1899	2064
4400	928	1333	1555	1736	1910	2076
4450	934	1341	1564	1747	1921	2088
4500	940	1349	1573	1757	1932	2100
4550	946	1357	1582	1767	1943	2113
4600	952	1365	1591	1777	1955	2125
4650	957	1373	1600	1787	1966	2137
4700	963	1381	1609	1797	1977	2149
4750	969	1389	1618	1807	1988	2161
4800	975	1397	1627	1817	1999	2173

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
4850	979	1403	1633	1824	2006	2181
4900	983	1407	1637	1828	2011	2186
4950	986	1411	1641	1833	2016	2191
5000	990	1415	1644	1837	2020	2196
5050	993	1419	1648	1841	2025	2201
5100	996	1423	1652	1845	2030	2206
5150	1000	1427	1656	1850	2034	2211
5200	1003	1431	1660	1854	2039	2217
5250	1007	1436	1663	1858	2044	2222
5300	1010	1440	1667	1862	2049	2227
5350	1014	1445	1672	1868	2055	2234
5400	1018	1451	1679	1876	2063	2243
5450	1022	1457	1686	1883	2072	2252
5500	1027	1463	1693	1891	2080	2261
5550	1031	1469	1700	1899	2089	2270
5600	1036	1475	1707	1906	2097	2279
5650	1040	1481	1714	1914	2105	2289
5700	1044	1487	1720	1922	2114	2298
5750	1049	1493	1727	1929	2122	2307
5800	1053	1499	1734	1937	2131	2316
5850	1057	1505	1741	1945	2139	2325
5900	1062	1511	1748	1952	2148	2334
5950	1066	1517	1755	1960	2156	2343
6000	1071	1523	1761	1968	2164	2353
6050	1075	1529	1768	1975	2173	2362
6100	1079	1536	1775	1983	2181	2371
6150	1085	1542	1783	1992	2191	2381
6200	1090	1549	1791	2000	2200	2392
6250	1095	1556	1798	2009	2210	2402
6300	1100	1563	1806	2017	2219	2412
6350	1105	1570	1814	2026	2228	2422
6400	1110	1577	1821	2034	2238	2432
6450	1115	1584	1829	2043	2247	2443
6500	1120	1591	1836	2051	2256	2453
6550	1125	1598	1844	2060	2266	2463
6600	1130	1605	1852	2068	2275	2473
6650	1135	1612	1859	2077	2285	2483
6700	1140	1619	1867	2085	2294	2494
6750	1145	1625	1875	2094	2303	2504
6800	1151	1632	1882	2103	2313	2514

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
6850	1156	1639	1890	2111	2322	2524
6900	1160	1646	1898	2120	2332	2535
6950	1165	1653	1906	2129	2342	2546
7000	1170	1660	1914	2138	2352	2556
7050	1175	1667	1922	2147	2361	2567
7100	1180	1674	1930	2156	2371	2578
7150	1185	1681	1938	2165	2381	2588
7200	1190	1687	1946	2173	2391	2599
7250	1195	1694	1954	2182	2401	2609
7300	1199	1701	1962	2191	2410	2620
7350	1204	1708	1970	2200	2420	2631
7400	1209	1715	1978	2209	2430	2641
7450	1214	1722	1986	2218	2440	2652
7500	1219	1729	1994	2227	2450	2663
7550	1224	1736	2002	2236	2459	2673
7600	1229	1743	2010	2245	2469	2684
7650	1233	1749	2017	2253	2478	2694
7700	1238	1756	2024	2261	2487	2704
7750	1243	1762	2032	2269	2496	2714
7800	1248	1769	2039	2278	2505	2723
7850	1253	1776	2046	2286	2514	2733
7900	1257	1782	2054	2294	2523	2743
7950	1262	1789	2061	2302	2532	2753
8000	1267	1795	2068	2310	2541	2762
8050	1272	1802	2076	2319	2550	2772
8100	1276	1808	2083	2327	2559	2782
8150	1281	1815	2090	2335	2568	2792
8200	1286	1822	2098	2343	2577	2802
8250	1291	1828	2105	2351	2586	2811
8300	1296	1835	2112	2359	2595	2821
8350	1300	1841	2120	2368	2604	2831
8400	1305	1848	2127	2376	2613	2841
8450	1310	1854	2134	2384	2622	2850
8500	1315	1861	2142	2392	2631	2860
8550	1320	1868	2149	2400	2640	2870
8600	1324	1874	2156	2408	2649	2880
8650	1329	1881	2164	2417	2659	2890
8700	1334	1888	2172	2426	2669	2901
8750	1339	1895	2181	2436	2679	2912
8800	1344	1902	2189	2445	2689	2923

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
8850	1349	1909	2197	2454	2699	2934
8900	1353	1916	2205	2463	2710	2945
8950	1358	1923	2214	2473	2720	2956
9000	1363	1930	2222	2482	2730	2967
9050	1368	1937	2230	2491	2740	2978
9100	1373	1944	2238	2500	2750	2990
9150	1378	1951	2247	2509	2760	3001
9200	1383	1958	2255	2519	2771	3012
9250	1387	1965	2263	2528	2781	3023
9300	1392	1972	2271	2537	2791	3034
9350	1397	1979	2280	2546	2801	3045
9400	1402	1986	2288	2556	2811	3056
9450	1407	1993	2296	2565	2821	3067
9500	1412	2000	2304	2574	2831	3078
9550	1417	2007	2313	2583	2842	3089
9600	1421	2014	2321	2593	2852	3100
9650	1426	2020	2328	2601	2861	3110
9700	1428	2024	2332	2605	2866	3115
9750	1431	2027	2336	2609	2870	3120
9800	1433	2031	2340	2614	2875	3125
9850	1436	2034	2344	2618	2880	3130
9900	1438	2038	2347	2622	2884	3135
9950	1441	2041	2351	2626	2889	3140
10000	1443	2044	2355	2630	2894	3145
10050	1445	2048	2359	2635	2898	3150
10100	1448	2051	2363	2639	2903	3155
10150	1450	2055	2366	2643	2908	3160
10200	1453	2058	2370	2647	2912	3166
10250	1455	2061	2374	2652	2917	3171
10300	1458	2065	2378	2656	2922	3176
10350	1460	2068	2382	2660	2926	3181
10400	1463	2072	2385	2664	2931	3186
10450	1465	2075	2389	2669	2936	3191
10500	1468	2079	2393	2673	2940	3196
10550	1470	2082	2397	2677	2945	3201
10600	1473	2085	2401	2681	2950	3206
10650	1475	2089	2404	2686	2954	3211
10700	1479	2094	2410	2692	2961	3219
10750	1483	2100	2416	2699	2969	3227
10800	1487	2105	2422	2706	2976	3235

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
10850	1491	2111	2428	2713	2984	3243
10900	1495	2116	2434	2719	2991	3251
10950	1499	2122	2441	2726	2999	3260
11000	1504	2127	2447	2733	3006	3268
11050	1508	2133	2453	2740	3014	3276
11100	1512	2138	2459	2746	3021	3284
11150	1516	2144	2465	2753	3029	3292
11200	1520	2149	2471	2760	3036	3300
11250	1524	2155	2477	2767	3043	3308
11300	1528	2160	2483	2774	3051	3316
11350	1532	2166	2489	2780	3058	3324
11400	1536	2171	2495	2787	3066	3333
11450	1540	2177	2501	2794	3073	3341
11500	1545	2182	2507	2801	3081	3349
11550	1549	2188	2513	2808	3088	3357
11600	1553	2193	2520	2814	3096	3365
11650	1557	2199	2526	2821	3103	3373
11700	1561	2204	2532	2828	3111	3381
11750	1565	2210	2538	2835	3118	3389
11800	1569	2215	2544	2841	3126	3398
11850	1573	2221	2550	2848	3133	3406
11900	1577	2226	2556	2855	3141	3414
11950	1582	2232	2563	2863	3149	3423
12000	1586	2239	2570	2871	3158	3433
12050	1591	2245	2577	2879	3167	3442
12100	1595	2251	2585	2887	3176	3452
12150	1600	2258	2592	2895	3185	3462
12200	1604	2264	2600	2904	3194	3472
12250	1609	2271	2607	2912	3203	3482
12300	1613	2277	2614	2920	3212	3492
12350	1618	2283	2622	2928	3221	3501
12400	1622	2290	2629	2937	3230	3511
12450	1627	2296	2636	2945	3239	3521
12500	1631	2303	2644	2953	3248	3531
12550	1636	2309	2651	2961	3257	3541
12600	1640	2316	2658	2969	3266	3551
12650	1645	2322	2666	2978	3275	3560
12700	1649	2328	2673	2986	3285	3570
12750	1654	2335	2681	2994	3294	3580
12800	1659	2341	2688	3002	3303	3590

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
12850	1663	2348	2695	3011	3312	3600
12900	1668	2354	2703	3019	3321	3610
12950	1672	2360	2710	3027	3330	3619
13000	1677	2367	2717	3035	3339	3629
13050	1681	2373	2725	3044	3348	3639
13100	1686	2380	2732	3052	3357	3649
13150	1690	2386	2739	3060	3366	3659
13200	1695	2392	2747	3068	3375	3669
13250	1699	2399	2754	3076	3384	3678
13300	1704	2405	2762	3085	3393	3688
13350	1708	2412	2769	3093	3402	3698
13400	1713	2418	2776	3101	3411	3708
13450	1717	2424	2784	3109	3420	3718
13500	1722	2431	2791	3118	3429	3728
13550	1726	2437	2798	3126	3438	3737
13600	1731	2444	2806	3134	3447	3747
13650	1735	2450	2813	3142	3456	3757
13700	1740	2457	2820	3150	3465	3767
13750	1745	2463	2828	3159	3475	3777
13800	1749	2469	2835	3167	3484	3787
13850	1754	2476	2843	3175	3493	3797
13900	1758	2482	2850	3183	3502	3806
13950	1763	2489	2857	3192	3511	3816
14000	1766	2493	2863	3198	3517	3823
14050	1770	2498	2868	3203	3524	3830
14100	1773	2503	2873	3209	3530	3837
14150	1776	2507	2878	3215	3536	3844
14200	1780	2512	2883	3221	3543	3851
14250	1783	2517	2889	3227	3549	3858
14300	1786	2521	2894	3232	3556	3865
14350	1790	2526	2899	3238	3562	3872
14400	1793	2531	2904	3244	3568	3879
14450	1797	2535	2909	3250	3575	3886
14500	1800	2540	2915	3256	3581	3893
14550	1803	2545	2920	3261	3588	3900
14600	1807	2549	2925	3267	3594	3907
14650	1810	2554	2930	3273	3600	3914
14700	1814	2558	2935	3279	3607	3921
14750	1817	2563	2941	3285	3613	3927
14800	1820	2568	2946	3290	3620	3934

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
14850	1824	2572	2951	3296	3626	3941
14900	1827	2577	2956	3302	3632	3948
14950	1830	2582	2961	3308	3639	3955
15000	1834	2586	2967	3314	3645	3962
15050	1837	2591	2972	3320	3651	3969
15100	1841	2596	2977	3325	3658	3976
15150	1844	2600	2982	3331	3664	3983
15200	1847	2605	2987	3337	3671	3990
15250	1851	2610	2993	3343	3677	3997
15300	1854	2614	2998	3349	3683	4004
15350	1858	2619	3003	3354	3690	4011
15400	1861	2624	3008	3360	3696	4018
15450	1864	2628	3013	3366	3703	4025
15500	1868	2633	3019	3372	3709	4032
15550	1871	2638	3024	3378	3715	4039
15600	1874	2642	3029	3383	3722	4046
15650	1878	2647	3034	3389	3728	4053
15700	1881	2652	3039	3395	3735	4059
15750	1885	2656	3045	3401	3741	4066
15800	1888	2661	3050	3407	3747	4073
15850	1891	2666	3055	3412	3754	4080
15900	1895	2670	3060	3418	3760	4087
15950	1898	2675	3065	3424	3767	4094
16000	1902	2679	3071	3430	3773	4101
16050	1905	2684	3076	3436	3779	4108
16100	1908	2689	3081	3442	3786	4115
16150	1912	2693	3086	3447	3792	4122
16200	1915	2698	3091	3453	3798	4129
16250	1918	2703	3097	3459	3805	4136
16300	1922	2707	3102	3465	3811	4143
16350	1925	2712	3107	3471	3818	4150
16400	1929	2717	3112	3476	3824	4157
16450	1932	2721	3117	3482	3830	4164
16500	1935	2726	3123	3488	3837	4171
16550	1939	2731	3128	3494	3843	4178
16600	1942	2735	3133	3500	3850	4184
16650	1946	2740	3138	3505	3856	4191
16700	1949	2745	3143	3511	3862	4198
16750	1952	2749	3149	3517	3869	4205
16800	1956	2754	3154	3523	3875	4212

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
16850	1959	2759	3159	3529	3882	4219
16900	1963	2763	3164	3534	3888	4226
16950	1966	2768	3169	3540	3894	4233
17000	1969	2773	3175	3546	3901	4240
17050	1973	2777	3180	3552	3907	4247
17100	1976	2782	3185	3558	3913	4254
17150	1979	2787	3190	3564	3920	4261
17200	1983	2791	3195	3569	3926	4268
17250	1986	2796	3201	3575	3933	4275
17300	1990	2801	3206	3581	3939	4282
17350	1993	2805	3211	3587	3945	4289
17400	1996	2810	3216	3593	3952	4296
17450	2000	2814	3221	3598	3958	4303
17500	2003	2819	3227	3604	3965	4310
17550	2007	2824	3232	3610	3971	4316
17600	2010	2828	3237	3616	3977	4323
17650	2013	2833	3242	3622	3984	4330
17700	2017	2838	3247	3627	3990	4337
17750	2020	2842	3253	3633	3997	4344
17800	2023	2847	3258	3639	4003	4351
17850	2027	2852	3263	3645	4009	4358
17900	2030	2856	3268	3651	4016	4365
17950	2034	2861	3273	3656	4022	4372
18000	2037	2866	3279	3662	4028	4379
18050	2040	2870	3284	3668	4035	4386
18100	2044	2875	3289	3674	4041	4393
18150	2047	2880	3294	3680	4048	4400
18200	2051	2884	3299	3685	4054	4407
18250	2054	2889	3305	3691	4060	4414
18300	2057	2894	3310	3697	4067	4421
18350	2061	2898	3315	3703	4073	4428
18400	2064	2903	3320	3709	4080	4435
18450	2067	2908	3325	3715	4086	4441
18500	2071	2912	3331	3720	4092	4448
18550	2074	2917	3336	3726	4099	4455
18600	2078	2922	3341	3732	4105	4462
18650	2081	2926	3346	3738	4112	4469
18700	2084	2931	3351	3744	4118	4476
18750	2088	2935	3357	3749	4124	4483
18800	2091	2940	3362	3755	4131	4490

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
18850	2095	2945	3367	3761	4137	4497
18900	2098	2949	3372	3767	4143	4504
18950	2101	2954	3377	3773	4150	4511
19000	2105	2959	3383	3778	4156	4518
19050	2108	2963	3388	3784	4163	4525
19100	2112	2968	3393	3790	4169	4532
19150	2115	2973	3398	3796	4175	4539
19200	2118	2977	3403	3802	4182	4546
19250	2122	2982	3409	3807	4188	4553
19300	2125	2987	3414	3813	4195	4560
19350	2128	2991	3419	3819	4201	4566
19400	2132	2996	3424	3825	4207	4573
19450	2135	3001	3429	3831	4214	4580
19500	2139	3005	3435	3837	4220	4587
19550	2142	3010	3440	3842	4227	4594
19600	2145	3015	3445	3848	4233	4601
19650	2149	3019	3450	3854	4239	4608
19700	2152	3024	3455	3860	4246	4615
19750	2156	3029	3461	3866	4252	4622
19800	2159	3033	3466	3871	4259	4629
19850	2162	3038	3471	3877	4265	4636
19900	2166	3043	3476	3883	4271	4643
19950	2169	3047	3481	3889	4278	4650
20000	2172	3052	3487	3895	4284	4657
20050	2176	3056	3492	3900	4290	4664
20100	2179	3061	3497	3906	4297	4671
20150	2183	3066	3502	3912	4303	4678
20200	2186	3070	3507	3918	4310	4685
20250	2189	3075	3513	3924	4316	4692
20300	2193	3080	3518	3929	4322	4698
20350	2196	3084	3523	3935	4329	4705
20400	2200	3089	3528	3941	4335	4712
20450	2203	3094	3533	3947	4342	4719
20500	2206	3098	3539	3953	4348	4726
20550	2210	3103	3544	3959	4354	4733
20600	2213	3108	3549	3964	4361	4740
20650	2216	3112	3554	3970	4367	4747
20700	2220	3117	3559	3976	4374	4754
20750	2223	3122	3565	3982	4380	4761
20800	2227	3126	3570	3988	4386	4768

<i>Combined Monthly Net Income</i>	<i>One Child</i>	<i>Two Children</i>	<i>Three Children</i>	<i>Four Children</i>	<i>Five Children</i>	<i>Six Children</i>
20850	2230	3131	3575	3993	4393	4775
20900	2233	3136	3580	3999	4399	4782
20950	2237	3140	3585	4005	4405	4789
21000	2240	3145	3591	4011	4412	4796
21050	2244	3150	3596	4017	4418	4803
21100	2247	3154	3601	4022	4425	4810
21150	2250	3159	3606	4028	4431	4817
21200	2254	3164	3611	4034	4437	4823
21250	2257	3168	3617	4040	4444	4830
21300	2261	3173	3622	4046	4450	4837
21350	2264	3177	3627	4051	4457	4844
21400	2267	3182	3632	4057	4463	4851
21450	2271	3187	3637	4063	4469	4858
21500	2274	3191	3643	4069	4476	4865
21550	2277	3196	3648	4075	4482	4872
21600	2281	3201	3653	4080	4489	4879

Please note: The *Guideline Chart* continues to \$30,000. If the *parties'* combined monthly *net incomes* exceed \$21,600 but are less than \$30,001, the applicable *Guideline Chart* can be found at Pa. R.C.P 1910.16-3 and which is published at www.supportguidelines.com/main.html .

COMBINED MONTHLY NET INCOMES IN EXCESS OF \$30,000

When the parties combined net income exceeds \$30,000 per month, calculation of child support, spousal support, and APL is computed pursuant to Pa R.C.P. 1910.16 - 3.1 which is published at www.supportguidelines.com/main.html

GENERAL ADVICE FOR A DOMESTIC RELATIONS CONFERENCE

1. Make sure you know exactly where you are to appear and arrive on time. The *conference* will proceed without you if you are late or fail to appear.
2. If an interpreter is needed, please contact our office at least two weeks prior to your conference.
3. Unless the *conference* is for *paternity* DNA testing, please do not bring any children with you.
4. Dress respectfully and appropriately: No shorts, tee shirts, or sloppy, dirty clothing.
5. Bring whatever paperwork you have received from the Domestic Relations Office.

6. Always be honest. Failing to tell the truth is a crime, and could cause the Domestic Relations staff to doubt your truthfulness.
7. Bring all information to document your support case (receipts, bills, income information, medical information, pay stubs, tax returns, daycare receipts, etc.).
8. Make two (2) copies of all your documents relating to your support case. One copy will be for the Domestic Relations files and one copy for the other party. Keep the original for your records.
9. Do not bring food or drinks with you.
10. Parking is not provided, so make plans or arrangements for parking (location of public parking garages, parking meters, bus schedules, etc).
11. Be mature, courteous, and respectful.
12. All defendants are expected to make their first support payment at the conference, so bring along cash, money order, or cashier's check.

Although these matters may be very upsetting to you, focus your attention on the purpose of the *conference* or *hearing* to assist the Conference Officer in establishing an appropriate support order under the law. Present the facts as you know them. Remember, Domestic Relations *Conference Officers*, *Enforcement Officers*, and Client Service Representatives are here to serve both *parties* and do what is appropriate under the Pa. Support Guidelines and the law.

UPDATING PERSONAL INFORMATION

Parties must inform the Domestic Relations Office and the other *party*, in writing, of any material change in circumstances relevant to the level of support or the administration of the support order, within (7) seven days, including, but not limited to the following:

- loss or change of income or employment
- change of address (notarized statement or appear in person with valid ID)
- change of custody of the child(ren)
- divorce (*alimony*)
- separation of married *parties* (*spousal support/APL*)
- change of medical insurance coverage

A party who willfully fails to report a material change in circumstances may be held in contempt of court.

NOTE: Any party with a current family violence issue, need not notify the other party.

PATERNITY CASES

If *paternity* is at issue, *paternity* must be established before a child support order can be entered. If the child(ren) was born while the *parties* were married, the husband is legally presumed to be the father of the child(ren). However, if the child(ren) was born to unmarried parents, the *defendant* is not presumed to be the father of the child.

Paternity may be established if the *defendant* signed an Acknowledgement of Paternity form at the hospital. This Acknowledgement of Paternity, however, may be rescinded (voided) if either party cancels the acknowledgement within sixty (60) days or before any legal proceeding relating to the child is held, whichever occurs first (including a Domestic Relations support proceeding). To rescind the Acknowledgement of Paternity, send your written statement to: DHS Paternity Coordinator, P.O. Box 8018, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8018.

If a *plaintiff* files an action for support against a *defendant* and if the *defendant* is properly served with notice and fails to appear, he is automatically deemed to be the father of the child(ren) (see 23 Pa. C.S.A. § 4342(e)).

If a *defendant* denies *paternity* of the child (believes that he is not the father of the child), a support order cannot be entered until *paternity* is established. *Genetic testing* of the *parties* and child(ren) will automatically be scheduled (unless the child was born while the parents were married, the husband is legally presumed to be the father of the child, or the father signs an Acknowledgement of Paternity at the hospital or at the Domestic Relations Office). A trained buccal swab collector at the Domestic Relations Office will obtain DNA samples from both *parties* and the child.

A laboratory will test the DNA samples of the parents and child(ren) to determine the likelihood the *defendant* is the child(ren)'s biological father. After reviewing the test results, if the *defendant* admits that he is the father of the child(ren), he signs an Acknowledgement of Paternity document. If the *defendant* continues to deny *paternity* after receiving the genetic test results, the case will be scheduled for trial before a Judge. If the genetic test results indicate that the alleged father is excluded as the biological father, the *complaint* for support against that *defendant* will be dismissed, unless the *plaintiff* timely contests the genetic test results. A Rule to Show Cause will direct the *plaintiff* to file an answer within twenty (20) days of service to challenge the *paternity* exclusion on why he should/should not be found by the Court to be the father of the child.

The defendant can hire an attorney or acquire an attorney for paternity issues. Legal counsel for the Domestic Relations Office represents the *plaintiff*. If the defendant is determined to be the father by the Court, the Court will usually order him to pay the genetic test costs and court costs.

After *paternity* is resolved, a support *conference* will be scheduled for all *parties* to establish a child support order.

FAILURE OF A PARTY TO APPEAR FOR A CONFERENCE

Both *parties* will be mailed a notice to appear for a *conference* at the Domestic Relations Office at their last known address.

If a *plaintiff* files an action for support against a *defendant* and if the *defendant* is properly served with notice and fails to appear, he is automatically deemed to be the father of the child(ren) (see 23 Pa. C.S.A. § 4342(e)).

If a *plaintiff* fails to appear for a scheduled support *conference*, the case may be dismissed. However, if the *plaintiff* is on public assistance (*TANF*), the case will continue in his/her absence. DHS will be notified that the *plaintiff* has failed to cooperate and may be sanctioned and/or removed from public assistance.

If the Domestic Relations Office was given the *defendant's* employer's name and address before the *conference*, income information will be requested from that employer. The *Conference Officer* can compute the support order without the *defendant's* personal appearance.

The law requires proof that the *defendant* has been given notice of the support action and the date and time of the *conference*. Even if the *defendant* fails to appear, a support order may be entered if it is established that the *defendant* was properly served with notice. Otherwise, the *conference* must be rescheduled and a new conference notice must be sent to each party.

ENTRY OF A SUPPORT ORDER

During a *conference*, a Domestic Relations *Conference Officer*, based on the Pa. Support Guidelines, computes a recommended support order. This order is signed by a Judge and mailed to the *parties* at their last known address. This order becomes a final order if not timely appealed by either party within twenty (20) days.

DISABLED DEFENDANTS OR PLAINTIFFS

A disabled plaintiff or defendant may be held to their earning capacity as they may be able to work part-time. For more information, go to the U.S. Social Security Office, 555 Walnut Street, Harrisburg and ask for Working While Disabled – How We Can Help (publication no. 05-11017) or go to www.socialsecurity.gov . Also, contact Works for Me at 877-268-9894 or online at www.worksforme-pa.org .

UNREIMBURSED MEDICAL EXPENSES

Responsibility to pay the *plaintiff's* unreimbursed medical expenses (for *spousal support* or *APL*) and/or the child(ren) is allocated between the *parties* in proportion to their respective *net incomes*.

Standard support orders provide that the *defendant* is responsible for unreimbursed medical expenses in excess of \$250 per person per year. In the year in which the initial support order is entered, the \$250 threshold is prorated. After the first year, the expenses are calculated on a calendar year basis. Medical expenses include insurance co-payments and deductibles and all expenses incurred for reasonably necessary medical services and supplies, including but not limited to surgical, dental, orthodontic, optic, psychiatric, psychological or mental health counseling if court ordered. Medical expenses do not include cosmetic or chiropractic services unless specifically directed in the court order.

Plaintiffs must pay the medical expenses in full and process all insurance claims before submitting these expenses to the *defendant* for reimbursement no later than March 31 of the year following the calendar year in which the party received the final bill. Enforcement of unreimbursed medical expenses not timely provided by the party seeking payment shall be within the discretion of the court. The *plaintiff* is responsible for providing the *defendant* with copies of all unreimbursed medical expenses and copies of the insurance company's determination on reimbursement. *Plaintiffs* are encouraged to send medical reimbursement requests to *defendants* on a monthly basis (after expenses exceed \$250 per person), obtain a certificate of mailing from the U.S. Postal Service, and keep copies of all receipts sent to the *defendant*. Failure of the *defendant* to directly reimburse the *plaintiff* for these expenses, within 30 days of receipt, will subject the *defendant* to enforcement and contempt proceedings.

MODIFYING (CHANGING) A SUPPORT ORDER

Parties must within seven (7) days file a Petition for Modification or Termination of an existing order at the Domestic Relations Office, including a detailed description of any material and substantial changes in circumstances relevant to the support order if the following occurs:

- loss or change of income or employment
- change of address
- change of custody of the child(ren)
- divorce (*alimony*)
- separation of married *parties* (*spousal support/APL*)
- change of medical insurance coverage

A party who willfully fails to report a material change in circumstances may be held in contempt of court. Either party may file a Petition to Modify a support order.

This Petition must include the reasons for a modification is warranted and appropriate under the law. A filing fee of \$15 must be paid at the time of filing.

Some reasons why a support order may be modified include the following:

1. The *parties* have reconciled and live together.
2. The *parties* have reached an agreement to modify the amount of the support order and the *plaintiff* is not receiving cash assistance (DHS).
3. The income of one or both *parties* has increased or decreased.
4. There are extraordinary (unusual) and ongoing medical expenses that were not present at the time the last order was established.
5. A child on the support order is more than eighteen years old, has graduated or is no longer attending high school.
6. *APL* and *spousal support* terminate when a final decree in divorce has been issued.
7. Primary physical child custody change or is otherwise emancipated.

Modifications of support orders, absent fraud, are effective the date that the modification petition was filed unless otherwise agreed upon by the *parties*. Therefore, *parties* should file a Petition to Modify as soon as possible after a relevant change in circumstances.

SUSPENSION/TERMINATION OF A SUPPORT ORDER

To terminate or suspend a support order, a party must file a petition at the Domestic Relations Office and pay a \$15 filing fee. Child support orders may be terminated if a child has graduated from high school, is emancipated, or is living with another person. *Parties* may also terminate a support order if they both agree, as long as the child(ren) is not receiving cash assistance (*TANF*). *APL* or *spousal support* orders are terminated upon divorce of the *parties*.

If a petition is filed to terminate support, a *conference* will be scheduled.

If a *plaintiff* files a suspension petition, photo identification is required. The support order will be suspended when the order is signed by a Judge.

If any *arrears* are owed at the time of suspension, the *defendant* generally will be ordered to pay arrears at the same monthly amount as the prior charging support order.

THREE-YEAR REVIEW

According to federal law, *parties* have a right to a review of their support case once every three years. A notice will be automatically mailed to the *plaintiff* and *defendant* to inform them that a three-year review is warranted. If either party elects to have the three-year review, they must file a petition, within sixty (60) days of the notice.

ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION/TERMINATION

If no payments are being made and all enforcement efforts have been unable to locate the defendant or any monies, the Domestic Relations Office will evaluate the case and search for assets that can be attached for support. If all income verification and enforcement tools have been exhausted, under the law (Pa. R.C.P. 1910.19 (f)) the support case may be modified/terminated and all arrears removed without prejudice.

The Court may administratively modify or terminate a support order when it appears that:

- The support order is no longer able to be collected; or
- The defendant is unable to pay support, because of lack of known income or assets, and there is no reasonable prospect that the defendant will be able to pay in the foreseeable future; and/or
- The support case meets Federal case closure criteria under 45 CFR 303.11.

If income or assets are discovered, the order and/or arrears may be added back onto the case.

The plaintiff will receive written notification and given an opportunity to contest this action by completing information on the notice to the Domestic Relations Office. If the plaintiff files an objection, the case will be scheduled for a conference. If the plaintiff does not file an objection, the court may administratively modify/terminate the case and the remitted arrears.

Note: Defendant's incarceration for failure to pay support does not qualify a case for administrative modification, termination and/or case closure under Pa. R.C.P. 1910.19(f).

FILING AN APPEAL

If a support order is entered, following a conference, either party may file an *appeal* from the temporary order. The Notice of Right to Hearing informs both *parties* that any *appeal* must be filed within twenty (20) days from the date the order is mailed. If an *appeal* is not filed by that date (received by the Domestic Relations Office), along with the \$15 filing fee, the temporary order becomes a final order of the court. If an *appeal* is timely filed, a de novo *hearing* will be scheduled before a Judge. The temporary support order remains in effect. The *defendant* is required to pay the temporary order while the *appeal* is pending before the Court.

The *parties* or their attorneys may file legal briefs regarding their *appeal* with the Judge. On the date of *appeals court*, attorneys present their *clients'* position, or a *plaintiff* or *defendant* may argue *pro se*, present relevant exhibits, and witnesses. The Judge will issue a final support order.

In addition, after the Judge hears the case, the Judge may order the *plaintiff* and *defendant* to attend Seminar for Families in Change & Conflict in their county (see page 51).

To assist in understanding the appeal process a video can be accessed at www.DauphinCounty.org, Government Services, Court Departments, Self Help Center, Navigating the Child Support Process.

Please do not write or telephone a Judge concerning your case. Such communications are inappropriate and will not positively influence the Judge's decision.

PAYING YOUR SUPPORT

Defendants

Any payment made directly to the plaintiff may be considered "gifts."

The Court frequently orders defendants to establish payment accounts where the defendant changes employers frequently or is self-employed. Defendants should establish one of the payment methods listed.

1) MAILING PAYMENTS

You may remit a support payment in the form of a check or money order to Pennsylvania State Collection and Disbursement Unit (PA SCDU). The check or money order must be payable to PA SCDU and should include the defendant's name and PACSES member ID. Do not mail cash. If you received a payment coupon, include it with your check or money order. If you do not have a payment coupon, contact the Domestic Relations Office to request payment coupons.

The check or money order should be mailed to:

PA SCDU
P.O. Box 69110
Harrisburg, PA 17106-9110

If you have more than one support case, you will receive one combined payment coupon each month. Send one payment for all your support cases.

PACSES will divide the payment between all cases according to Federal law.

If the Domestic Relations Office does not have a wage attachment order with the defendant's employer, the defendant will receive a payment coupon each month.

2) **WAGE ATTACHMENT**

Until a *defendant's wage attachment* is activated by the employer, the *defendant* must make all support payments directly to *PA SCDU* (see Mailing Payments). The Court routinely issues orders attaching the *defendant's* wages at their employer. The employer is responsible for sending the support payments to *PA SCDU*. If the total amount of the support order is not being deducted by the employer, the *defendant* is responsible to pay the difference directly to *PA SCDU* each month.

The defendant must contact the Domestic Relations Office any time employment status changes. In order to attach wages, the Domestic Relations Office must be provided the name, address, and telephone number of the *defendant's* employer's payroll department.

3) **ELECTRONIC PAYMENT METHODS**

(fees may be assessed for these services):

PACSES Member ID number are needed for these services

- Expert pay – www.ExpertPay.com – 1-800-403-0879 (checking/savings account)
- E-Childs Pay – www.e-ChildsPay.com – 1-888-392-3991 (Visa, Mastercard, Discover)
- Money Gram – www.moneygram.com/PayBills (receive code: 14677)
- PA SCDU IVR – 1-800-955-2305 (MasterCard, Visa, or Discover)

RECEIVING SUPPORT PAYMENTS

Plaintiffs

Plaintiffs have two options to receive their support payments:

- 1) Direct deposit into their bank account
- 2) Pennsylvania EPPICard™ Debit MasterCard

These methods do not apply to plaintiff's receiving DHS cash assistance.

BANK ACCOUNT DIRECT DEPOSIT

Plaintiffs may have support payments deposited directly into their bank account. The direct deposit form is available at the Domestic Relations Office, online at www.childsupport.state.pa.us, or call SCDU at 1-877-727-7238.

PA EPPICard™

Plaintiffs may have their support payments credited to them on a PA EPPICard™. The plaintiff then may access support monies paid by utilizing the card.

If you have a question about your card or need a replacement card, you must contact PA EPPICard™ at 1-800-304-1669 or online at www.eppicard.com. The Domestic Relations Office cannot issue replacement cards. There may be a fee for replacement cards.

OBTAINING INFORMATION ABOUT SUPPORT PAYMENTS

PA SCDU has a computerized (automated) answering service. For questions about your support payments, call the *PA SCDU* Customer Service Unit at 1-877-PAS-SCDU (1-877-727-7238). Payment information is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To speak to a *PA SCDU* customer service representative, call Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Your child support information may also be obtained at www.childsupport.state.pa.us. You must first set up a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to access your private information.

If you do not have internet access, you may go to your local public library. You also may use the Domestic Relations Office Interactive Voice Response System (IVR) (717) 255-2796. You must have touch tone telephone service.

ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE

Notice of a scheduled enforcement conference is mailed by the Domestic Relations Office to *defendants* who have been non-compliant with his/her support order (payments are not being made despite *wage attachment* or if the *defendant* is not abiding by the court order). This notice reminds the *defendants* of their duty to pay support and the legal consequences for failure to pay the court ordered support. Enforcement *conferences* are at the Domestic Relations Office.

Defendants can purge themselves of their contempt order and avoid incarceration by paying a lump sum purge payment. The purge amount is generally calculated based upon the last six months of unpaid support, any unpaid health insurance premiums, and/or any unpaid medical expenses, etc.

At the enforcement conference, the defendant should appear with a payment. The defendant is ordered to bring his/her recreational licenses with them (hunting, trapping, boating, and fishing).

If the *defendant* is unable to work due to a mental or physical disability, medical proof (written letter from a doctor) must be provided to the Domestic Relations Office. Most people with disabilities are still able to work part-time. For more information, go to the U.S. Social Security Office, 555 Walnut Street, Harrisburg and ask for Working While Disabled (publication no. 05-11017) or go to www.socialsecurity.gov . Also contact Works for Me at www.worksforme-pa.org .

If the *defendant* does not comply with the *Enforcement Officer's* instructions, a contempt proceeding before the Court will be scheduled. If an employer deducts support payments but does not remit them, the employer is subject to contempt proceedings.

ENFORCEMENT AND COLLECTION OF SUPPORT ORDERS

There are many enforcement actions which the Domestic Relations Office may use to enforce support orders:

1. *Wage attachments*
2. Tax refund intercept
3. Passport denial
4. Financial institution account seizure
5. *Credit bureau reporting*
6. *Lien and Judgment*
7. Driver's license suspension
8. Recreational license suspension
9. Professional licenses suspension
10. Incarceration at Dauphin County Prison or Work Release Center

WAGE ATTACHMENTS

All cases automatically require a *wage attachment* order if the *defendant* has wage attachable employment. A *wage attachment* is a court order which directs the *defendant's* employer to deduct the support from the *defendant's* paycheck and send it to PA SCDU. *Wage attachments* also can be issued against Unemployment Compensation, *Social Security Disability*, Workers' Compensation, and some pension benefits under Pa. R.C.P 1910.21(a)

TAX REFUND INTERCEPT

Under the law, *the defendant's* federal (IRS) and state tax refunds are automatically intercepted and applied to support arrears in qualifying cases. Federal tax: 45 CFR§303.72 - State tax: 23 Pa. C.S. §4307. All jointly filed IRS tax refunds are held for a period of six months prior to disbursement to allow the *defendant's* spouse to file a claim for their share of the tax refund.

If you have any questions about the tax refund intercept program, contact:

DOMESTIC RELATIONS OFFICE
Attn: Tax Refund Offset Coordinator
P.O. Box 1295
Harrisburg, PA 17108
(717) 255-2796

PASSPORT DENIAL, REVOCATION, OR RESTRICTION

Federal law authorizes the denial, revocation, or restriction of delinquent *defendant's* passports. Currently, the U.S. State Department is denying passports to any *defendant* with child support arrearages exceeding \$2,500. 42 U.S.C. 652(k)

FINANCIAL INSTITUTION ACCOUNTS

The defendant's funds in any financial institution (banks, credit unions, brokerage accounts) may be seized for support arrears. Written notification of the seizure is sent to the *defendant*. The *defendant* and any joint owner of the account may file an objection to the seizure within thirty (30) days for the following reasons only under Pa. R.C.P. 1910.23:

- No overdue support exists or there is a mistake in the certified amount of overdue support
- There is a mistake in the identity of the *defendant*
- The account is not subject to the seizure under the law

CREDIT BUREAU REPORT

If a *defendant* is more than sixty (60) days in *arrears* of the support order, the delinquency will be reported to the major credit bureaus. This will affect the *defendant's* credit rating. The *defendant* has the right to contest the report within twenty (20) days of the date of the notice. To contest the reported delinquency, the *defendant* must, in writing or in person, state the basis of the objection. The only facts that can be contested are: Name, Social Security Number, address, or the amount of support arrearage due. The objection must be received by the Domestic Relations Office within the twenty (20) day period. 23 Pa.C.S. §4303.

LIENS AND JUDGMENTS AGAINST PROPERTY

Under the law, any overdue support (greater than one month's support obligation) becomes a *judgment* against the *defendant* under Pa. R.C.P. 1910.24. The *judgment* may be enforced against the *defendant's* real property and/or personal property (cars, boats, checking accounts, bonds, personal injury settlements, etc.). This *judgment* has the full force and effect as any other legal *judgment* and is enforceable in Pa. or may be enforceable in any other state.

Executing on a *defendant's* property is a legal proceeding. *Plaintiffs* should consult an attorney. Attorneys should check the following website for *lien* searches: www.childsupport.state.pa.us ; (under *lien* search).

DRIVER'S LICENSE SUSPENSION

Under the law, the Pa. Department of Transportation may suspend the driver's licenses of *defendants* who have overdue support arrearages in excess of three months and whose paycheck is not currently wage attached under 23 Pa.C.S. §4355(d.1). This also applies to commercial driver's license. *Defendants* are provided advanced notice that their license will be suspended, unless within thirty (30) days, they file an objection, for the following reasons only: mistakes of fact, errors in amount of overdue support owed and/or mistaken identity.

RECREATIONAL LICENSE SUSPENSION

Federal and state law authorizes denial, for renewal or issuance of recreational licenses of *defendants* with overdue support arrears (in excess of three months) and their paycheck is not currently wage attached under 23 Pa.C.S. §4355(d.2)(d.3).

PROFESSIONAL LICENSE OR PERMIT SUSPENSION

Federal and state law authorizes suspension or denial of any license, certificate, permit, or other authorization to engage in a profession, trade, or business for a *defendant* with overdue support *arrears* (in excess of three months). *Defendants* are provided advanced notice that their licenses will be suspended, unless within thirty (30) days they file an objection, for the following reasons only: mistakes of fact, errors in the amount of *arrears* due and/or mistaken identity. 23 Pa.C.S. §4355(a)(b)(iii)

CONTEMPT

A *defendant* is in contempt of a court order for willfully failing to make child or *spousal support/APL payments* or for failing to follow any other directive in a court order.

A party who willfully fails to report a material change in circumstances may also be held in contempt of court. Pa.R.C.P. 1910.25

CONTEMPT COURT – INCARCERATION

Defendants who have failed to comply with their support orders and have failed to comply with the *Enforcement Officer's* instructions following the enforcement conference may be scheduled for *Contempt Court*. If the *defendant* was unable to work due to a mental or physical disability, medical proof (written letter from a doctor) is required. Generally, the *defendant* is required to pay the amount of court ordered support not paid within a six (6) month period.

The *defendant* is subject up to six (6) months incarceration per support case, fines up to \$500, court costs, and \$120 sheriff's costs. *Defendants* can purge themselves of contempt and avoid incarceration by paying their purge Pa.R.C.P. 1910.25-5.

CAPIAS COURT

If the *defendant* fails to appear for *Contempt Court* or fails to comply with a previous *Contempt Court* order, a capias (arrest warrant) will be issued. When the capias is served, the *defendant* is placed in Dauphin County Prison. If the defendant failed to appear for contempt court he/she will be presented for Capias Court before a Judge, within 72 hours. The *defendant* is subject up to six (6) months incarceration per support case, fines up to \$500, court costs, and \$120 sheriff's costs.

Most *defendants* with employment are eligible to serve their sentence at the Dauphin County Work Release Center (WR). If they are directed to present themselves to the WR Center on a future date, the defendant must have a tuberculosis (TB) test. They are eligible for release from the Prison or the WR Center if they pay their purge amount, \$120 sheriff's costs, if applicable and work release fees/costs, if applicable.

Most *defendants* are required to maintain at least full-time wage attachable employment. *Defendants* may also be ordered to obtain, in addition to full-time employment, drug and alcohol evaluation and treatment, attend a parenting class, sexually transmitted disease (STD) class, Seminar for Families in Change & Conflict, job skills training, community service, and any other program deemed necessary for the *defendant* to be a good parent in addition to paying support.

SEMINAR FOR FAMILIES IN CHANGE & CONFLICT

This is a seminar for parents, paramours, grandparents, and any other adult that is caring for children whose parents do not reside together. The Seminar is presented by the staff of InterWorks, a consortium of educators, counselors, and psychotherapy practitioners. Research shows that children can be irreparably harmed when they are in the center of conflict. The purpose of the Seminar is to increase the understanding of the adults of the unfortunate, yet predictable, emotional turmoil that often occurs when parenting from separate households. Special focus is placed on the important needs of children during this emotional turmoil and conflict and how to best manage

this conflict in the best interest of the children. The Seminar assists parents in keeping their children’s best interests separate from parental conflict and how to create for their children a “conflict-free zone.” In addition to parents, other interested third *parties* such as live in paramours, step-parents, and grandparents are encouraged to attend.

The Seminars are given one Saturday morning each month at the Dauphin County Courthouse. The cost is \$50 per person. Call (717) 236-1912 for the dates and times. If you reside in another county, you may attend a similar Seminar in that county.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

If transportation services are necessary to appear at a support *conference* or *hearing*, a *plaintiff* or *defendant* may access public transportation information via the internet at www.pacommuterservices.com. This service includes information for Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, and York Counties.

CUSTODY AND VISITATION

The Domestic Relations Office does not resolve custody or visitation disputes between the *parties*. All custody cases filed in the Prothonotary’s Office are scheduled generally within 30 days for a Conciliation Conference before a Conciliation Officer. If the case does not settle before the Conciliator, it is assigned to a civil court judge by the Deputy Court Administrator.

SELF HELP CENTER

If you are looking for information on any of the topics listed below, please go to the Self Help Center, located in the Law Library on the fourth floor of the Dauphin County Courthouse, 101 Market Streets, Harrisburg, PA. At the Self Help Center, you will be able to purchase a packet that may contain the information and forms you need.

The Self Help Center is open Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The information packets are also available 24 hours a day on the Court’s website: www.dauphincounty.org.

THE AVAILABLE FORMS AND COSTS ARE LISTED BELOW:

- How to file for divorce (3301(d)) when date of separation was prior to 12-5-2016 and parties have continued to live separate and apart for a period of at least two years and the parties do not own martial property **OR** date of separation was on or after 12-5-2016 and parties have continued to live separate and apart for a period of at least one year and the parties do not own martial property (\$10)
- How to file for divorce (3301(c)) where parties consent to the divorce and neither party requests the division of property, the award of alimony and/or the

reimbursement of attorney's fees, costs and expenses (\$10)

- How to file a custody complaint when there is no existing custody order (\$10)
- How to file a petition for modification of an existing custody order (\$10)
- How to file an emergency petition for special relief in custody (\$10)
- How to file a petition for civil contempt of an existing custody order (\$10)
- How to file an in forma pauperis petition (family law cases) for use when you believe you cannot afford to pay the filing fees (\$5)
- How to file an in forma pauperis petition (civil non-family law cases) for use when you believe you cannot afford to pay the filing fees (\$5)
- How to file a driver's license or registration suspension appeal (\$10)
- How to file a name change petition for an adult (\$10)
- How to file a name change petition for a minor (\$10)
- How to file a motion for continuance (\$5)
- How to file a petition to record marriage (\$10)
- How to file a demand for hearing de novo before the court (\$5)
- How to file a motion for continuance of a PFA hearing (\$5)
- How to file a petition to waive costs for all or a portion of transcript costs (\$5)

The Self Help center staff and the staff in any court office are not permitted to give you legal advice. The information in the packets is not a substitute for professional legal advice. The court assumes no responsibility and accepts no liability for actions taken by users of these documents, including reliance on their contents. If you want to obtain the services of an attorney but do not know whom to contact, you may call the Dauphin County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service at (717) 232-7536.

WORK RELEASE PROGRAM

WR is a Community Corrections facility utilized by the Courts to incarcerate sentenced defendants in order to provide an opportunity for them to maintain current employment or secured new employment.

Christian Recovery Aftercare Ministry (CRAM) provides a four week employment assistance project at the Dauphin County Work Release Center. This course is held one night a week and offers job search assistance, job readiness, one-on-one mentoring, resume preparation, and mock interviewing to work release residents.

Under the law, child support is computed utilizing the following form:

CHILD SUPPORT COMPUTATION FORM

	<i>Defendant</i>	<i>Plaintiff</i>
1. Number of dependents in this case	_____	_____
2. Total gross monthly income	\$ _____	\$ _____
3. Subtract monthly deductions	\$ _____	\$ _____
4. Monthly <i>net income</i> (subtract line 3 from line 2)	\$ _____	\$ _____
5. Combined total monthly <i>net income</i> (add both totals on line 4)		\$ _____
6. Monthly Social Security benefits for child(ren) (see Rule 1910.16-2(b)(2))		\$ _____
7. Adjusted combined monthly <i>net income</i> (add line 5 and line 6)		\$ _____
8. Basic child support obligation (use chart on previous pages; find number of children and combined monthly income on line 7)		\$ _____
9. Less monthly Social Security benefit for child(ren)		\$ _____
10. Basic child support obligation (subtract line 9 from line 8)		\$ _____
11. <i>Net income</i> as percentage of combined incomes (to determine <i>parties</i> ' proportionate income, divide party's line 4 monthly net by parents' combined incomes line 5)	_____ %	_____ %
12. Each parent's monthly share of the basic child support obligation (multiply line 10 and <i>defendant's</i> line 11 and then line 10 and <i>plaintiff's</i> line 11)	\$ _____	\$ _____

PART II. SUBSTANTIAL OR SHARED PHYSICAL CUSTODY ADJUSTMENT, IF APPLICABLE Rule 1910.16-4(c)

- 13 a. Percentage of time spent with children (*defendant*) _____%
(divide number of custodial overnights with *defendant* by 365 and multiply by 100)
- b. Subtract 30% _____%
- c. *Defendant's* adjusted percentage share of the basic monthly support obligation _____%
(subtract line 13b from line 11)
- d. *Defendant's* adjusted share of the basic monthly support obligation _____
(multiply line 13c and line 10)
- e. Further adjustment, if necessary under subdivision (c)(2) of Rule 1910.16-4 _____

PART III. ADDITIONAL EXPENSES (see Rule 1910.16-6)

- 14 a. *Defendant's* share of child care expenses \$ _____
- b. *Defendant's* share of health insurance premium (if the *plaintiff* is paying the premium) \$ _____
- c. Less *Plaintiff's* share of the health insurance premium (if the *defendant* is paying the premium) \$ _____
- d. *Defendant's* share of unreimbursed medical expenses \$ _____
- e. Other additional expenses (tuition, extracurricular activities, etc.) \$ _____
- f. Total additional expenses (add line 14 a – e) \$ _____
15. *Defendant's* total monthly support obligation \$ _____
(add *defendant's* line 12 or 13d or e (if applicable) and line 14f)

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Alimony - court ordered support (for a former spouse) after a divorce decree is entered.

Alimony Pendente Lite (APL) - court ordered temporary support for a spouse when a divorce action is pending.

Appeal - a legal document filed with the court, seeking judicial review of the order of support entered pursuant to the recommendation of the Domestic Relations *Conference Officer*.

Appeals Court - the judicial proceeding as a result of an *appeal* of the *Conference Officer's* recommendation.

Arrears - unpaid support, in excess of one month support.

Case Number - the docket number assigned to each support case. Each case has two numbers: a Dauphin County Domestic Relations docket number (5000-DR-01) and a *PACSES case number* (123456789).

Complaint - the name of the document or pleading filed with the Domestic Relations Office or Prothonotary that seeks entry of a support order or *APL*.

Conference - the meeting with a Domestic Relations worker to establish, modify, enforce or terminate a support order.

Conference Officer - a Domestic Relations employee who conducts support *conferences* and prepares a recommended support order signed by the Judge.

Contempt Court - a *hearing* before a Judge at which the *defendant* must explain why he/she is not complying with the support order. A finding of contempt may result in *defendant's* incarceration up to six (6) months per case.

Credit Bureau Reporting - report sent to local credit bureaus concerning *defendants* who are over sixty (60) days in *arrears* of their support obligation.

Custodial parent - the person who has primary care, custody, and control of a minor child(ren).

Defendant - the person who pays support. This person is also called the *non custodial parent*, *obligor*, or alleged father.

Delinquency notice - a notice sent to *defendants* whose support payments are delinquent and are not being paid in full.

Earning capacity - earning potential assigned to a party that willfully fails to obtain employment, equal to their age, education, training, health, work experience, earning history, and child care responsibilities.

Enforcement Officer - a Domestic Relations employee who conducts enforcement conferences when *defendants* are not paying the support order or complying with a provision of the support order.

Ex parte communication - a written or oral communication such as a letter or phone call made from one *party* to the Court, without the presence of the other party.

General Assistance - a state funded program which provides money for persons who do not meet the requirements for *TANF*. (Example: An adult, other than a relative, who is caring for a child under the age of 13 or individuals/couples with no dependent children who have temporary or permanent disabilities that prevent their employment.)

Genetic testing - scientific testing used to establish *paternity*.

Guideline Chart - the Support *Guideline Chart* on page 28.

Hearing - a trial during which *parties* and witnesses present testimony under oath before a Judge.

Intrastate - a case in which one of the *parties* (*plaintiff/defendant*) resides in another county in Pennsylvania and that county in Pennsylvania is providing services to the *plaintiff* or *defendant*.

Intergovernmental - a case in which one of the *parties* (*plaintiff/defendant*) resides in another state and that state is providing services to the *plaintiff* or *defendant*.

IRS Intercept - the action whereby a *defendant's* IRS tax refund is intercepted to pay support.

Judgment - an automatic judgment is recorded against the defendant who owes back support under the law. This *judgment* can be filed in the County's Prothonotary's office.

Lien - a legal vested claim on real or personal property.

Local case - a case in which both *parties* are under the jurisdiction of the Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas and its Domestic Relations Office.

Mandatory deductions - The deductions from one's gross income to compute *net income* for support computations such as federal, state, and local taxes, mandatory retirement, and mandatory union dues. *Mandatory deductions* do not include child or *spousal support*, voluntary retirement, savings or other deductions.

Modifying an Order - changing a support order.

Net income - determined to be a *parties'* income after federal, state, and local taxes, F.I.C.A. payments, non-voluntary retirement deduction, union dues, and *alimony* paid to the other party is deducted from the *parties'* gross pay.

Non custodial parent - is the person who does not have primary physical custody and control of a minor child(ren).

Obligee - The person to whom the Obligor pays support. Also called the plaintiff.

Obligor – The person who is obligated to pay support to the Obligee. Also called the defendant.

Parties - the *plaintiff* and *defendant* involved in the support case.

Paternity - legal determination of fatherhood.

PACSES - Pennsylvania Child Support Enforcement System. A statewide automated computer system which tracks cases and maintains support.

PA SCDU - Pennsylvania State Collection and Disbursement Unit. The statewide collection and disbursement system for all support orders in Pennsylvania.

Plaintiff - the person who files a *complaint* seeking child/*spousal support*. In child support cases, the *plaintiff* is usually the person with whom the child primarily resides. This person may also be called the *custodial parent* or *obligee*.

Pro rata - a party's percentage share of the support obligation based upon the proportion of their *net income* to the total of both *parties*' combined *net incomes*. Example: If *plaintiff's net income* is \$1,000 per month and *defendant's* is \$1,000 per month, *defendant's pro rata* share is 50%.

Purge monies – If a judge finds a defendant in contempt of court for failing to abide by a court order, the judge establishes how a defendant can “purge” themselves of the contempt to avoid incarceration. Usually, the purge is the amount of support not paid within six months of the contempt notice sent to the defendant.

Retroactive Arrears - Support that accumulated between the time the *plaintiff* filed the support action and the time the support order is entered, less any money paid.

Social Security Disability - payments received from the Social Security Administration during a period of a party's disability. A party's *SSD* payment is considered income for support calculations.

Spousal Support - court ordered support for a spouse if the *parties* (*defendant/plaintiff*) are married.

T.A.N.F. - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Department of Human Services cash grant paid for children.

Wage Attachment Order - a court order requiring an employer to deduct a support order amount from the *defendant's* income and send the support amount to *PA SCDU*.

Notes

**Mission Statement
of the
Domestic Relations Office
Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas**

Our mission is to serve the public by providing child and spousal support services as authorized by law and local rules of the court.

We will establish, modify, and enforce orders of support and provide support collection services for children and families in an effective and efficient manner, making prudent use of public resources.

We will perform our duties with honor and professionalism and treat our clients with respect and dignity.