

CHILD SUPPORT ESSENTIALS

Harris County Family Courts participate in the FOCAS Program, a partnership between the Harris County Domestic Relations Office (DRO), the Texas Attorney General (OAG) (800)252-8014, and the Harris County District Clerk's Office (DCO), to enforce the payment of child support.

*Did you know that you face up to **6 months in jail for every 1 month you don't pay** support?
Did you know **you can easily pay your child support** at most gas stations and grocery stores?*

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- **WHO MUST PAY?** Any parent ordered to pay child support.
- **WHAT TO PAY?** Current, medical, retroactive and/or arrearage child support. Review the child support section(s) of your order for the amount(s), start date(s) and due date(s). For questions, contact the DRO at (713)274-7300. For copies of orders, contact the DCO at (713)755-7300.
- **WHERE TO PAY?** Your order directs where child support must be paid. Most orders direct that child support is paid to the:
**Texas Support Disbursement Unit
P. O. Box 659791
San Antonio, Texas 78265-9791**
- **WHEN TO PAY?** Pay the ordered amount(s) by the ordered dates. Allow 5 days mail time so that your payments arrive by the due dates. If you are unable to send the full amount when due, send whatever amount you can send, as often as you can, until the full ordered amount is paid.
- **HOW TO PAY?** You may pay directly to the TXCSDU by: **1) personal check; 2) money order; 3) Western Union** (at grocery stores, gas stations, etc.); **4) credit card online** at <https://childsupport.oag.state.tx.us>; **5) in person CASH ONLY** at the Child Support window at 1115 Congress, Room 10 Basement **or 6) income withholding**. You, the court, the payee or the FOCAS Program may notify your employer to withhold support from your wages. If you pay by income withholding, you must pay your support yourself until your employer begins to withhold. If your employer is unable to withhold the full amount, you must pay the difference yourself to the TXCSDU.
- **WHY PAY?** Child(ren) need the emotional and financial support of both parents.
- **HOW TO RECEIVE PROPER CREDIT?** **Always pay through the TXCSDU and always write the payee's name, Cause # and OAG # on every payment.** Your Cause # is the 9-digit number at the top of your court order. Your OAG Case # is the 10-digit number assigned by the OAG.
- **WHAT IF I AM NOT RECEIVING POSSESSION OF MY CHILD(REN)?** You must pay your support regardless of whether you are receiving possession of your child(ren), and you are entitled to parenting time (visitation) regardless of whether you are paying your support. Contact the DRO at (713)74-7300 for help with parenting time.
- **WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT PAY AS ORDERED?** If you do not pay your support as ordered, you may face serious legal consequences. **You may not receive credit for payments made directly to the payee.** Keep written proof of all payments. Delinquencies will result in interest being added and may result in credit bureau reporting, seizure of assets or tax refunds or suspension of licenses. **Legal action may be filed by the DRO, the OAG or a private attorney.** Legal action can result in court appearances, findings of contempt, jail sentences, community supervision and costs and fees.



*Children are our joy and future.
Your child(ren) need the complete support of both parents to thrive!*