

When a court orders a servicemember or civilian to pay child support, the employer must do what it can to ensure compliance with the court order. Agencies of the federal government, state agencies and employers are working together to ensure compliance with court orders. The key to collecting child support is getting information and assistance from the state [Child Support Enforcement Office](#). (The name of the office may differ slightly in each state.)

State child support enforcement personnel work with the appropriate agencies in an effort to establish paternity, and locate “deadbeat” parents and their employers. If necessary, they assist in obtaining and enforcing child support orders.

In the absence of an agreement between the parties or a court order for child support, service regulation may establish a regulatory support requirement. Links to these sites are provided under the Service Heading.

Servicemembers or family members with questions should contact their local Legal Assistance Office for free advice. Family members not receiving the required support may also contact their local Inspector General (IG) Office for assistance in obtaining this support.

The best starting point for information on establishing paternity and/or collecting child support is the Department of Health & Human Services Office of Child Support Enforcement [Home Page](#). The [Handbooks/Pamphlets](#) page has many links in English and Spanish. General information on obtaining a child support order can be found in the online [Handbook on Child Support Enforcement](#). The site also has online, [A Case Worker's Guide to Child Support Enforcement and Military Personnel](#). This Guide provides more specific information in those cases when the non-supporting parent is an active duty member of the Armed Services. It identifies and discusses tools child support enforcement workers use to cope with some of the most common difficulties in child support enforcement cases involving military personnel. The section entitled "[COLLECTING SUPPORT FROM MILITARY PERSONNEL](#)" identifies the applicable military support policies.

The Defense Finance & Accounting Service (DFAS) web site [DFAS](#) includes information on collecting court-ordered alimony and child support through garnishment. After obtaining a Support Order through a government agency or local support office (such as welfare or child support enforcement offices), a prosecuting attorney, District Attorney, clerk of court, or private attorney send a copy (not the original) by certified mail, return receipt requested to DFAS.

After accepting a request, DFAS responds to the applicant within 30 days. The servicemember or federal civilian employee will be notified within 15 days of receipt of the application for support and has 30 days to respond to DFAS with

proof that the order has been amended, suspended or set aside. The request is generally processed within 45 days.