

# Applying for Child Support Services in Vermont

## Information You Need to Know Before Applying

The Office of Child Support (OCS) is the state agency responsible for establishing, collecting, enforcing, and modifying child and medical support orders for children. In all related proceedings, OCS represents the state's interests—not the interests of either parent (or guardians).

### *OCS can help you:*

- Establish parentage;
- Establish an order for child and medical support;
- Modify or enforce an existing order for child and medical support;
- Make support payments to the custodial parent; and
- Locate a missing non-custodial parent.

### *OCS cannot help you:*

- Establish or modify parental rights and responsibilities (*custody*);
- Establish or modify parent-child contact (*visitation*); and
- Establish or modify guardianship.

## Eligibility For Services

Services are available to custodial and non-custodial parents (and guardians) of children who are under 18 or still in high school. You may also be eligible if you are owed court-ordered child support (referred to as *arrears*) and the youngest child for whom support is owed is under 24.

## Cost Of Services

If you apply to OCS, child support services are free. There is a \$5 monthly fee, however, if a court orders payments be made through OCS and neither party applies for services. *You will be notified in advance if it becomes necessary to charge a fee for other services.*

### **This information is important. If you need help understanding it, tell us.**

Ova informacija je važna. Ako Vam je potrebna pomoć da je razumijete, obavijestite nas. (*Bosnian*)

Ces informations sont importantes. Si vous avez besoin d'aide pour les comprendre, dites-le nous. (*French*)

Iyi n'inkenuzo ngirakamaro. Tubwire, mugihe woba ushaka impfashanyo y'ugusobanukirwa. (*Kirundi*)

Macluumaadkan waa muhiim. Haddii aad u baahan tahay caawimaad ah fahanka macluumaadka, noo sheeg. (*Somali*)

Esta información es importante. Si usted necesita ayuda para comprenderla, infórmenos. (*Spanish*)

Maelezo haya ni muhimu. Ikiwa unahitaji msaada wa kuyafahamu, tueleze. (*Swahili*)

Đây là thông tin quan trọng. Nếu quý vị cần trợ giúp để hiểu thông tin này, hay cho chúng tôi biết. (*Vietnamese*)



**KEEP THIS PAGE FOR YOUR RECORDS.**

## What You Can Expect From OCS

Within a few days of receiving your application, OCS will assign a caseworker to your case and notify the other party of our involvement. Your caseworker should, at minimum, conduct periodic reviews, contact other agencies for updates when necessary, and notify you of any major developments. He or she will devote as much time to your case as possible; however, caseworkers typically oversee hundreds of cases and have limited time to devote to each individual case.

*OCS will provide all services deemed appropriate. You are expected to cooperate with OCS. This includes, but is not limited to, returning calls, providing documents as requested, and informing us about changes in your contact information.*

## Instructions for Completing the OCS Application

Read these instructions carefully before you begin. Call 1-800-786-3214 if you have any questions or want an additional copy of the application mailed to you. You can also download the application from our website at [http://dcf.vermont.gov/ocs/apply\\_services](http://dcf.vermont.gov/ocs/apply_services).

### You may have to complete more than one application.

- If you are seeking support from more than one non-custodial parent, you must complete and file a separate application for each one.
- If you are paying support to more than one custodial parent, you must complete and file a separate application for each one.
- If you are a guardian seeking support from both parents, you must complete and file a separate application for each one.

### Complete all lightly shaded areas in the application.

These fields are required to process your application. If the shaded areas are not completed, your application(s) will be returned.

### Complete the application using a pen.

Please print clearly.

### Complete, sign, and attach the Authorization for Direct Deposit (see #6).

This is required by law.

### Sign the Agreement and Authorization for Receipt of Child Support Services (see #11).

This is required to process your application.

### Sign the Arrears Affidavit if you are owed arrears (see Attachment One).

Your signature is required to proceed.

### Gather copies of all required documents.

See the checklist on the back page.

## Statement Of Understanding

**I understand OCS representatives act on behalf of the State of Vermont to enforce child support laws; representatives do not act in the interests of any particular person or party; and OCS lacks the authority to become involved in custody and visitation issues.** This means OCS does not act as my personal advocate or representative in any legal proceedings before the Family Division of Superior Court; must make many discretionary decisions concerning best implementation of its policy objectives; and is guided not only by the economic interests of an individual case, but also by the best interests of a child. When OCS becomes involved in my case, it will investigate and make recommendations to the court based upon its interpretation of the law and facts.

**I understand the role of OCS and my continuing right to get my own attorney in connection with this matter.** I understand that in addition to the participation of OCS in my case, I may present my own information, testimony, or witnesses in any legal proceedings before the Family Division of Superior Court.

**I understand by receiving OCS services, I will receive all services deemed appropriate by OCS, many of which are automatic.** Services provided by OCS include locating a parent for the purpose of collecting child support; establishing parentage; establishing a child support order; establishing a medical support order; reviewing the amount of child support paid by the non-custodial parent to ensure the amount is consistent with guidelines; modifying a child support order due to a change in income or circumstances of one or both of the parents; collecting child support payments and sending them to the custodial parent; and enforcing a child support order. Other services that may be appropriate include, but are not limited to, certification of arrears with state and federal tax departments, reports to credit bureaus, lottery offsets, administrative wage withholding, data matches with financial institutions, trustee process, liens and other legal remedies. (Parties may not receive prior notification of every process OCS undertakes.) It is my responsibility to notify OCS in writing when I no longer want services from OCS.

**I understand payments received by the obligee directly (called direct payments) must be turned over to OCS who will issue them to the obligee.** I understand that failure to do so may result in the termination of OCS services. I understand if money is sent to me in error or issued to me based on a check from the non-custodial parent returned for insufficient funds, I must return the money. If I do not return the money, I authorize OCS to deduct such payments from future payments until this obligation is satisfied.

**I understand OCS is required to submit minimal information about me to a national directory used only by other state child support agencies.** If I believe that my children or I am at risk, I understand that I may request in writing that OCS not release my information to the directory. I further understand that if I ask OCS not to release my information, that there may be delays in my case because some automatic processes may not go forward as usual.

**I understand that after I have tried to resolve an issue with an OCS caseworker and supervisor, I have the right to request an OCS Administrative Review of any decision or action taken by OCS in my child support case.** I may call my OCS caseworker to request an *Administrative Review Form* or write to OCS, ATTN: Intercept Unit at 103 South Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671-1901, explaining my complaint and requesting an administrative review. I must include my name, Social Security number, address, daytime phone number, and note whether I want the review conducted in person, over the phone, or by mail.

**I understand that if a court order requires the non-custodial parent to provide health insurance for our child(ren), he or she will have access to information maintained by our child(ren)'s insurer (e.g., Social Security number).**

## Documents Checklist

### Signatures

Please make sure that you have signed:

- The *Authorization for Direct Deposit* (see #6);
- The *Agreement and Authorization for Receipt of Child Support Services* (see #11); and
- The *Arrears Affidavit* if you are owed arrears (see Attachment One).

### Attachments

Please attach copies of the following documents if applicable:

- Court orders related to child support;
- Existing court orders requiring health insurance or other medical support for the child(ren) named in this application;
- Guardianship order appointing you as legal guardian for the child(ren) named in this application;
- Birth certificate for child(ren) named in this application;
- Nondisclosure, protective, or relief-from abuse order; determination of good cause for non-cooperation with a child support agency; or explanation of why you believe releasing information about you or your child(ren) would be harmful; and
- Completed, signed, and witnessed *Voluntary Acknowledgment of Parentage* form.

### Submit Your Application To:

Vermont Office of Child Support  
103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, VT 05671-1901

### Need Help?

1-800-786-3214

<http://www.dcf.vermont.gov/ocs>