



How is the Amount of My Child Support Determined?



To determine the proper child support amount the court uses a "Statewide Uniform Guideline Formula". The most important components of the formula are the number of children involved, the parents' incomes, and the amount of time each parent is responsible for the child ("timeshare").

Number of Children

In most families the costs for the first child are the highest and additional children add somewhat less to the total cost. This is because certain costs, like shelter and transportation probably do not double for the second child. For example, if guideline child support in a particular case for one child is determined to be \$300 per month, then child support for two children, with the same factors otherwise, would be about \$480 or 1.6 times the support for one child. Child support for three children is 2.0 times the support for one child.

Income

The guideline formula uses both parents' average, after-tax income, from any source. In addition to taxes, mandatory union dues and retirement contributions, health insurance, and child and spousal support actually being paid are deducted. The court may allow deductions for job-related expenses, extraordinary health expenses, uninsured catastrophic losses, and the minimum basic living expenses of either parents' child from another relationship, who lives with that parent.

Timeshare Factor

The more time a parent spends taking care of a child, the lower their required financial contribution. Spending time taking care of the child is considered to be support of the child, and therefore that parent's financial contribution is lowered for that child.

Other Factors That May Be Taken into Consideration:

Other children supported by a parent, high medical costs, child care costs, seasonal or fluctuating income.

Is My Current Spouse's Income Included in the Child Support Order?

Except in extraordinary cases, the income of the current spouse or nonmarital partner of the parent owing child support is **not considered** when determining or modifying child support.

According to Family Code § 4057.5:

"When the owing parent "intentionally remains unemployed or underemployed and relies on a current spouse's income AND not considering the income of the current spouse or nonmarital partner would create a severe hardship for the child(ren)."



Child Support
Directors Association

A Coalition of Experts Collecting Billions
for California's Children

"Child Support... An Investment in the Future of Our Children"

CHILD SUPPORT DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

www.csdaca.org