



CSA and paying parents

The Child Support Agency (CSA) aims to make it easier for separated parents to support their children and meet their child support responsibilities.

Most parents want to do the right thing, however, some need some extra support, education and advice. When a parent does not meet their responsibilities, the CSA has an obligation to work with them to achieve the best outcome for their children and both parents.

Hints and tips

Paying your child support

- To make payments easier for you there are a range of convenient payment options including Electronic Funds Transfer, Bpay, mailpay and direct credit.
- Start a regular schedule to help you pay your child support eg. set a reminder in your phone on the same day each month.
- Arrange for your payments to come directly out of your wages or salary. You will always know you are paying in full and on time and will have a record of all of your payments.
- Consider a private collect arrangement. These are payments made directly between parents, however and whenever you want, as long as both parents agree on a payment plan.
- Tell the CSA your current income so your kids receive the right amount of child support and you don't pay more than you should.
- Lodge your tax return on time so you pay the correct amount of child support based on your accurate income, not an estimate.
- If you don't think your taxable income reflects your ability to pay, talk to the CSA about your options.
- If you have overdue child support the best thing you can do is call the CSA and work out a payment arrangement. By ignoring the situation it will only get worse.
- Pay your child support on time. Missing a payment or paying late can result in penalties. By paying on time you will be supporting your children.
- If you are finding it hard to pay your child support contact CSA straight away to discuss your options **131 272**.
- You can make a lump sum payment or arrange non agency payment with your ex-partner to clear any overdue child support. See the next page for more information.



Dealing with separation

- If you are not coping get help. There are a number of people available to help you with emotional, financial or other issues. Check the CSA's Community Service Directory at www.csa.gov.au for someone in your area.
- Form a business-like relationship with your ex-partner. This will allow you to look at the situation without getting emotional and negotiate what is best for your children.
- Maintain your relationship with your children. Even though you are separated you can still have a relationship with your children. You will also better understand where your child support payments are being spent and why.

Non agency payments: more control for paying parents

In cases where the CSA is collecting child support, the paying parent may choose to make a payment directly to the other parent or a third party.

Non agency payments can be in the form of cash, or buying any items or services and must be agreed to by both parents. Examples include school fees, medical expenses or even a school excursion. We recommend that non agency payments are not used as a regular way of paying child support, as you need to keep records of all the payments and notify the CSA each time so your account can be adjusted. If you want to use these types of payments regularly, a child support agreement with the other parent may be a better option for you.

Keeping in touch with the CSA

- Enrol to use CSAonline, the CSA's secure online service that lets you view and update your details online. It's a convenient way for you to deal with the CSA when and where it suits you, saving you time on the telephone. Go to www.csa.gov.au to enrol.
- If you receive a letter you don't understand call the CSA so that we can explain it to you.
- Contact CSA if your circumstances change (eg. contact details, care arrangements or income) or you have trouble making payments. Ring us now on **131 272** to get your payments back on track.

Additionally, there are prescribed payments that may be credited as child support without the agreement of the receiving parent. A prescribed payment is credited in a different way to a non agency payment. The paying parent must pay 70 per cent of their normal monthly child support payment and the remaining 30 per cent can be credited each month until the entire cost of the item (e.g. school fees) has been covered.

Non agency payments allow both parents to have a say about how child support payments are spent. For more information visit www.csa.gov.au



The CSA's approach to collecting overdue child support

Our approach differs for each parent according to their situation. To ensure appropriate financial support is provided to Australian children, we provide parents with the right balance of customer service, education and enforcement activities.

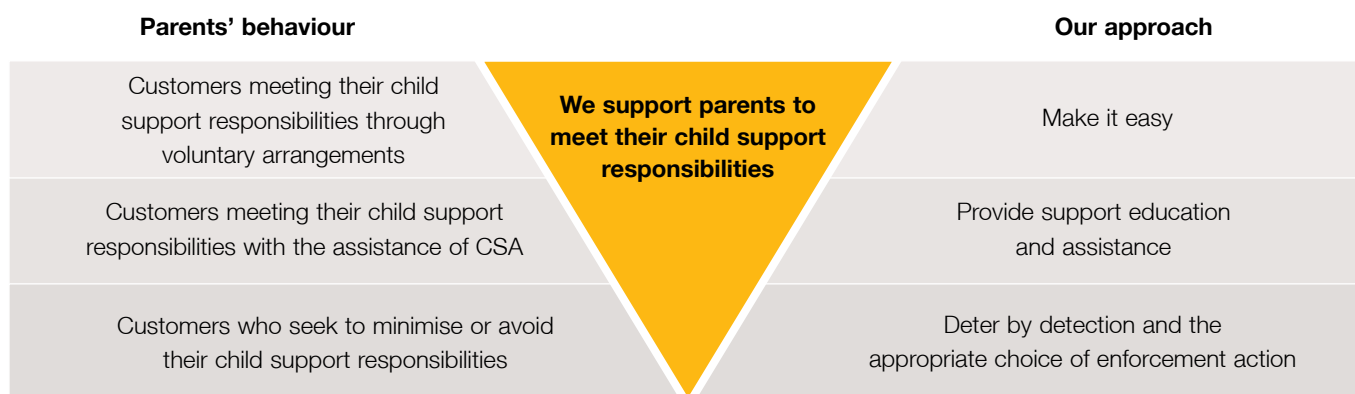
For most parents, our focus will be on making the system easier to use and providing support, education and assistance. However, parents who continue to avoid making child support payments will face a comprehensive range of advanced detection and enforcement actions.

In situations where there is little or no evidence of a parent's commitment to meeting their child support responsibilities or where there is evidence of fraud, we rely on enforcement activities to ensure we achieve the best outcome for children and both

parents. We tailor our response to address the particular situation of the parent.

At all times, we endeavour to use an approach that is:

- Considered reasonable, with the level of intervention limited to that required to achieve commitment
- Considered balanced, with customers being aware that we listen to 'both sides of the story' and their cooperation will help us achieve the correct outcomes.
- Communicated clearly to customers, so they know their responsibilities, how to meet them and the consequences if they fail to meet them.



Compliance strategy

For more information about CSA's compliance strategy - *CSA: Supporting parents to meet their child support responsibilities 2008-2010* or for more fact sheets on this subject visit www.csa.gov.au



For further information and help

Call CSA on **131 272**[†]

Call the Telephone Interpreting Service on **131 450**

Visit the CSA website **www.csa.gov.au**

Ask your representative to assist.

Support Services

Family Relationship Advice Line

Phone: **1800 050 321**

www.familyrelationships.gov.au

8am–8pm weekdays, 10am–4pm Sat. (public holidays excluded)

Assists people from families affected by relationship or separation issues.

Other CSA resources:

Getting Started—information about child support for separated parents.

Me and My series of self-help booklets (available in a range of languages and as audio downloads).

Dealing with Separation interactive CD Rom.

Family Separation: a guide for teens—helping young people cope with family separation and change.

CSAonline—this is a secure online service where you can view and update your child support information when it suits you. Go to **www.csa.gov.au** to enrol.

To order any free CSA publication or more fact sheets visit **www.csa.gov.au** or freecall **1800 040 972** (charges apply to mobile and public phones).

Your privacy

CSA collects information about you and your family for child support purposes. We understand that some information is sensitive, and we place great importance on protecting your privacy. For more information see the *Privacy* fact sheet.

The Australian Government Services Fraud tip-off line

The Australian Government Services Fraud tip-off line provides people with a place to report suspected fraud against Centrelink, Medicare, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme or the Child Support Agency. If you have information about someone who is mis-using government services, call **131 524**.

*Call charges may apply to the telephone numbers listed.

[†]Please note: your call may be recorded.

Do you need interpreting help?

If you don't speak English and need help from CSA, ring the Telephone Interpreting Service on **131 450**.

ARABIC إذا كنت لا تتحدث اللغة الإنكليزية والحجت إلى مساعدة من Child Support Agency، اتصل بخدمة الترجمة الخطية والشفاهية (TIS) على الرقم 13 14 50.

CHINESE 如果您不說英語，但需要Child Support Agency的協助，請致電翻譯及傳譯服務處(TIS)，電話13 14 50。

CROATIAN Ako ne govorite engleski i trebate pomoć Child Support Agency, nazovite Službu prevoditelja i tumača (TIS) na 13 14 50.

FARSI اگر انگلیسی نمی‌دانید و به کمک Child Support Agency نیاز دارید به سرویس ترجمه کتبی و شفاهی (TIS)، شماره 13 14 50 تلفن بزنید.

GREEK Αν δεν μιλάτε Αγγλικά και χρειάζεστε βοήθεια από το Child Support Agency, τηλεφωνήστε στη Μεταφραστική και Τηλεφωνική Υπηρεσία (TIS) στο 13 14 50.

INDONESIAN Jika Anda tidak berbahasa Inggris dan memerlukan bantuan dari Child Support Agency, silakan menelepon Jasa Penerjemahan dan Juru Bahasa (TIS) pada nomor 13 14 50.

ITALIAN Se non parli inglese e ti serve assistenza da parte della Child Support Agency, chiama il Servizio traduzioni e interpreti (TIS) al 13 14 50.

KHMER បើលោកអ្នកមិននិយាយអង់គ្លេសទេ បើលោកអ្នកត្រូវការជំនួយពី Child Support Agency សូមទូរស័ព្ទទៅអ្នកប្រាប់សំឡេងកម្ពុជា (TIS) លេខទូរស័ព្ទ 13 14 50 ។

KOREAN 당신이 영어를 못하고 Child Support Agency의 도움이 필요하시면 전화통역 서비스(TIS) 13 14 50 으로 전화하십시오.

MACEDONIAN Ако не зборувате англиски јазик и ви треба помош од Child Support Agency, телефонирајте во Службата за преведување и толкување (TIS) на 13 14 50.

MALTESE Jekk inti ma titkellimx bi-Ingliż, u trid għajnjuna miċ-Child Support Agency, cempel lis-Servizz ta' Interpreti bit-Telefon (TIS) fuq 13 14 50.

POLISH Jeśli nie mówisz po angielsku a potrzebujesz pomocy Child Support Agency, zadzwoń do Biura Tłumaczy (TIS) pod numer 13 14 50.

PORTUGUESE Se não fala inglês e precisa da ajuda da Child Support Agency, ligue para o Serviço de Tradutores e Intérpretes (TIS) no 13 14 50.

RUSSIAN Если вы не говорите по-английски и нуждаетесь в помощи Child Support Agency, звоните в Службу устного и письменного перевода (TIS) по телефону 13 14 50.

SERBIAN Ако не говорите енглески и треба вам помоћ од Child Support Agency назовите Службу преводилаца и тумача (TIS) на 13 14 50.

SPANISH Si no habla inglés y desea ayuda de Child Support Agency, llame al Servicio de Traducción e Interpretación (TIS) al 13 14 50.

TURKISH Eğer Child Support Agency'den yardım istiyorsanız ve İngilizce konuşamıyorsanız 13 14 50'den Yazılı ve Sözlü Tercümanlık Servisi'ni (TIS) arayınız.

VIETNAMESE Nếu không nói được tiếng Anh, mà cần Child Support Agency giúp, xin gọi điện thoại cho Dịch Vụ Thông Phiên Dịch (TIS), số 13 14 50.