



# Iowa Department of Human Services

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March 1, 2013

## **CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 56Z-611-FO**

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Collections  
Division of Field Operations

SUBJECT: Comm. 136, "What You Need to Know About Paying Child Support While Your Child Is in Foster Care," revised.

### **Summary**

The informational brochure Comm. 136, "What You Need to Know About Paying Child Support While Your Child Is in Foster Care," is revised to:

- ◆ Clarify procedures when parents do not provide income information when the order is set.
- ◆ Clarify enforcement procedures.

### **Effective Date**

Immediately.

### **Material Superseded**

This material replaces Circular Letter No. 56Z-597-FO, dated November 19, 2010.

### **Additional Information**

Order supplies of the revised Comm. 136, dated 1/13, from Anamosa in the usual manner.

Refer questions about this circular letter to your regional administrator.

- ◆ Offsetting lottery winnings
- ◆ Reporting past-due support to credit bureaus
- ◆ Suspending your licenses

**WHAT IF MY CHILD RECEIVES SOCIAL SECURITY PAYMENTS OR OTHER GOVERNMENT MONEY?**

If your child receives benefits or you receive a benefit check for your child, notify the social worker or juvenile court officer.

- ◆ The state becomes the payee while your child is in foster care.
- ◆ Even if your child's benefit amount was redirected to the state, you must still pay support.
- ◆ When your child leaves foster care, the benefits will start going back to you as payee.
- ◆ If you are disabled and receive social security disability benefits, please call the phone number listed in your legal notice or in this flyer.
- ◆ Call us if your child gets social security disability benefits because of your disability. You may get dollar-for-dollar credit to replace your child support.

All parents have a duty to support their children. This flyer explains what parents must do when their child is in foster care.

**Policy Regarding Discrimination, Harassment, Affirmative Action, and Equal Employment Opportunity**

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide equal treatment in employment and provision of services to applicants, employees, and clients without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, disability, political belief, or veteran status.

If you feel DHS has discriminated against or harassed you, please send a letter detailing your complaint to:

Iowa Department of Human Services  
 Office of Human Resources  
 Hoover Building – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
 1305 E. Walnut Street  
 Des Moines, IA 50319-0114  
 Fax: 515-281-4243; or via email:  
[dhscontact@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:dhscontact@dhs.state.ia.us)

For more information, call the child support automated information line at: **1-888-229-9223**. **Calling this number (nationwide toll free)** can also help you find the local office phone number for your area.

**Web site address:**

<https://secureapp.dhs.state.ia.us/childsupport/welcome.asp>



**What You Need to Know About Paying Child Support While Your Child Is in Foster Care**

Iowa's Children...Love Them...Support Them'

## **WHY AM I BEING ASKED TO PAY CHILD SUPPORT AND MEDICAL SUPPORT?**

Each parent has the legal duty to pay support while his or her child is in foster care. This includes parents who are living together or separate. It doesn't include stepparents.

Parents must pay support whether they place their child in foster care or the court orders placement. This includes children who need help or who have gotten in trouble with the law.

**When your child is in foster care, you receive legal notices and other information from Foster Care Recovery.** The support each parent pays applies to the total cost of foster care. The state of Iowa pays the cost up front.

The types of foster care for which parents will be asked to pay include:

- ◆ Family foster care
- ◆ Shelter care
- ◆ Group care
- ◆ Supervised independent living

## **HOW IS SUPPORT SET?**

If you already have an order to pay support for the child, foster care recovery does not get a new order. However, the support is owed to the state from the first day through the last day the child is in foster care.

**Getting a support order is a serious legal issue. You may want to ask a lawyer for advice about the order.**

If a parent does not already have a child support order, the process to get one starts.

Foster Care Recovery serves the parent with a legal notice asking for income information. The notice explains how child support and medical support are figured and how support can be paid.

**The order can be set at the right amount when each parent gives us enough income and deduction information. When parents don't give us income and deduction information, we may estimate income or use income from a last-known job of similar type.**

Foster Care Recovery uses the Iowa Supreme Court guidelines to set the amount of support. We use the information you and the other parent give us to find out the amount of support you should pay.

You get a notice showing the recommended amount of child support based upon your income information and availability of health insurance. The support order contains the child support and medical support amount unless someone objects. The court then must approve the support order. Once that happens, the order is final. You receive a copy of the final order.

## **WHAT IF I GET CHILD SUPPORT OR MEDICAL SUPPORT WHILE MY CHILD IS IN FOSTER CARE?**

**If you receive a support payment, please call. The phone number is in your legal notice or in this flyer. The payment may be owed to the state of Iowa.**

## **HOW CAN I PAY MY SUPPORT?**

Foster Care Recovery collects the amount of support ordered by the court.

You can pay your support from your wages or other income sources such as:

- ◆ Worker's compensation
- ◆ Unemployment
- ◆ Disability
- ◆ Retirement benefits

Your employer can take the support amount out of your paycheck. You can also choose to pay by having your bank send the money from your bank account.

**When you have a support order, Iowa law requires the court to block sale of real estate you own until the amount is paid in full.**

If you make regular payments and you owe past due support, Foster Care Recovery can take additional actions to collect support. Actions may include:

- ◆ Levying bank accounts
- ◆ Intercepting income tax refunds and other government payments