

WAC 388-14A-3945 How does DCS administer abatement of an incarcerated person's child support order? (1) The division of child support (DCS) abates a noncustodial parent's (NCP's) child support order under this chapter when it learns that the NCP is an incarcerated person and all of the following are true:

(a) The NCP is incarcerated for or begins serving a sentence of at least six months in confinement;

(b) The child support order contains abatement language; and

(c) DCS has reviewed its records and determines the NCP has no access to or possession of income or assets to pay child support while incarcerated.

(2) There is a rebuttable presumption that an incarcerated person has no access to or possession of income or assets to pay child support while incarcerated. DCS may assert it has rebutted the presumption. See WAC 388-14A-3955.

(3) When the requirements of subsection (1) of this section are met, the child support order is abated to ten dollars per month without regard to the number of children covered by that order.

(4) The first month support is abated is the date the NCP became confined or February 1, 2021, whichever is later.

(5) The abatement ends on the last day of the third full month following the NCP's release from confinement, unless an order entered in the court or administrative forum specifies a different date.

(6) DCS sends a notice of abatement to notify the custodial parent (CP) by regular mail to their last known address, with a copy to the NCP, that the abatement has been applied.

(7) If the CP disagrees with the notice of abatement, the CP may:

(a) Request a timely hearing within twenty days of the date of the notice of abatement (see WAC 388-14A-3965);

(b) Request an untimely hearing within one year of the date of the notice of abatement (see WAC 388-14A-3965); or

(c) Request in writing to terminate or reverse the abatement at any time during the period of abatement (see WAC 388-14A-3970).

(8) If the NCP disagrees with the notice of abatement, the NCP may request in writing to terminate or reverse the abatement at any time during the period of abatement (see WAC 388-14A-3960).

(9) If the abatement results in an overpayment by the NCP:

(a) Neither DCS nor the CP is required to refund any support collections or payments received by DCS prior to the date on which DCS learned of the incarceration; and

(b) The NCP is not entitled to a refund of any support collections or payments received by DCS prior to the date on which DCS learned of the incarceration.

(10) Abatement of a child support obligation of an incarcerated person does not constitute modification or adjustment of the order.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 26.09.916, 74.08.090, 74.20A.055. WSR 22-02-063, § 388-14A-3945, filed 1/4/22, effective 2/4/22.]