

## Where to go:

### Ashtabula County

Ashtabula County Child Support Enforcement Agency  
2924 Donahoe Drive, Ashtabula, Ohio 44004  
440.994.1212 or toll free: 800.935.0242

[www.acdjfs.org](http://www.acdjfs.org)

Ashtabula County Juvenile Court  
3816 Donahoe Drive, Ashtabula, Ohio 44004-4573  
440.994.6000

<http://courts.co.ashtabula.oh.us>

Ashtabula County Domestic Relations Court  
25 West Jefferson Street, Jefferson, Ohio 44047  
440.576.3637

<http://courts.co.ashtabula.oh.us>

### Cuyahoga County

Cuyahoga Support Enforcement Agency  
1640 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44114  
216.443.5100 or toll free: 800.443.1431

<https://cjs.cuyahogacounty.us/en-us/child-support.aspx>

Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court  
Clerk's Office  
2210 Cedar Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115  
216.698.4711

<http://juvenile.cuyahogacounty.us>

Cuyahoga County Domestic Relations Court  
Clerk's Office  
1200 Ontario Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44113  
216.443.7974

<http://domestic.cuyahogacounty.us>

### Geauga County

Geauga County Child Support Enforcement Agency  
12480 Ravenwood Drive  
P. O. Box 309, Chardon, Ohio 44024  
440.285.9141 or toll free: 800.209.7590

[www.geaugajfs.org](http://www.geaugajfs.org)

Geauga County Juvenile Court  
Courthouse Annex 2nd Floor  
231 Main Street, Suite 200, Chardon, OH 44024  
440.279.1830

[www.geaugacourts.org](http://www.geaugacourts.org)

Geauga County Domestic Relations Court  
100 Short Court, Chardon, Ohio 44024  
440.279.1960

[www.geaugacourts.org](http://www.geaugacourts.org)

### Lake County

Lake County Child Support Enforcement Agency  
177 Main Street, Painesville, Ohio 44077  
440.350.4000 or toll free: 800.442.1955

[www.lakecountyohio.org/ljfs](http://www.lakecountyohio.org/ljfs)

Lake County Juvenile Court  
53 East Erie Street, Painesville, Ohio 44077  
440.350.3000

[www.lakecountyohio.gov/juvenile](http://www.lakecountyohio.gov/juvenile)

Lake County Domestic Relations Court  
47 North Park Place, Painesville, Ohio 44077  
440.350.2708

<https://lcdrct.org>

### Lorain County

Lorain County Child Support Enforcement Agency  
42485 North Ridge Road, Elyria, Ohio 44035  
440.284.4401 or toll free: 800.808.2991

[www.lcdjfs.com](http://www.lcdjfs.com)

Lorain County Domestic Relations Court  
225 Court Street, Elyria, OH 44035  
440.329.5277 or 440.329.5187

[www.loraincounty.com/domesticrelations](http://www.loraincounty.com/domesticrelations)

Lorain County Domestic Relations Court, Juvenile  
Division

225 Court Street, Elyria, OH 44035  
440.329.5277 or 440.329.5187

[www.loraincounty.com/domesticrelations](http://www.loraincounty.com/domesticrelations)



The  
Legal Aid Society  
of Cleveland  
Since 1905

*This brochure was prepared by Legal Aid, which serves low-income residents of Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake and Lorain counties in Northeast Ohio.*

### Intake Line for New Legal Cases

Toll Free: 888.817.3777

### Tenant Information Line

Call for info related to tenants' rights and rental housing.  
(This line does not provide legal advice.)  
216.861.5955

### Learn more about Legal Aid and upcoming brief advice clinics:

[www.lasclev.org](http://www.lasclev.org)

### Legal Aid Offices:

#### Cleveland & Administrative Offices

1223 West Sixth Street, Cleveland, OH 44113

#### Elyria Office

1530 West River Road, Suite 301, Elyria, Ohio 44035

#### Jefferson Office

121 East Walnut Street, Jefferson, OH 44047

#### Painesville Office

8 North State Street, Suite 300, Painesville, OH 44077

*If you have a communications limitation, contact Legal Aid through the Ohio Relay Service at 800.750.0750.*

*Legal Aid offers interpretation and translation services so those with limited English proficiency can communicate with Legal Aid staff in their dominant and/or preferred language.*

*The information in this brochure cannot take the place of advice from a lawyer. Each case is different and needs individual legal advice. You should contact a lawyer if you need representation or if you have questions.*



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# Paying Child Support? Here's How To Apply For A Change



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[www.lasclev.org](http://www.lasclev.org)

**If the amount you earned when you were ordered to pay child support was more than you are making now, you may be able to change the amount of child support you pay. This is called “modification” of child support.**

### How to Start

You will need to supply a current address for the other parent, plus current employment and income information about yourself and about the other parent if you have such information.

### Where to Start

Where you apply for a change or modification of the amount of child support may depend on who ordered you to pay it in the first place or on other factors.

- **JUVENILE COURT:**  
If the child support order came from Juvenile Court, you can ask that court or your local Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) to modify it.
- **DOMESTIC RELATIONS:**  
If the child support order came from the Domestic Relations (Divorce) Court, you can ask that court or CSEA to modify it.
- **CSEA:**  
If the order came from your local Child Support Enforcement Agency, you can ask CSEA to modify it.

### Why go to CSEA?

The main advantages in going to the local CSEA are:

- You do not need a lawyer.
- There is no filing fee. (There is a filing fee for filing with the Court).
- You may not have to go to a hearing. You may be able to handle your case by phone and mail unless you disagree with CSEA’s decision and ask for an administrative hearing.
- CSEA will notify the other parent of your application.
- CSEA can get wage information about both parents. **However, if you receive Social Security Disability (SSD), Unemployment Compensation, Workers’ Compensation, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), OWE, or any other non-“W-2” income, you must provide documentation of that income.**

### Why go to Court?

- **You can apply to the courts at any time.** If your support order is less than three years old, and you lose your job through no fault of your own, you cannot apply to your local CSEA for a modification until you have been out of work for 30 days.
- If you have a divorce or other family matter that is still active in one of the courts, you have to go to that court to apply for a change.
- **If you are asking the court for other relief in addition to modification of support, such as for a change in custody or visitation, you must go to court.**
- You get to appear in person and tell your story to a magistrate or a judge.

### When Can You Ask for a Modification?

**Courts:**  
You can apply for a modification of your support order to the Juvenile Court or the Domestic Relations Court

at any time for any reason. **However, if the change is an amount that is less than 10% of the amount you already pay, the courts probably will not modify your support order.**

**CSEA:**  
**CSEA must review your support order upon your request if the order is more than three years old.** However, CSEA will not modify your support if the change in payment is less than 10% of the current amount ordered.

**If your support order is less than three years old,** you can apply for a modification from CSEA only for specific reasons:

- Either party has experienced a 30% change in income.
- Either party was under-employed at the time the order was set and now is employed full time.
- You have been laid off or fired for at least 30 days.
- You have begun receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- You have become disabled **and have begun receiving Social Security Disability (SSD) benefits.**
- You want to obtain health insurance coverage for the children.

### What Do You Do When a Child is No Longer a Minor?

You can apply to the courts or to CSEA at any time to remove a child from the support order because the child has reached the age of 18 **and** is out of high school, or has reached the age of 19.

### What Can Happen When You Ask for a Change?

- The support order can be lowered, increased, or remain the same.
- You may have a child removed from the support order because the child has reached the age of 18 and is out

of high school, or has reached the age of 19. This could lower your child support payments. However, the other parent could ask for an increase for the remaining children and you could end up paying the same amount or more.

- If you are behind in your support payments when the youngest child is no longer a minor, you will be ordered to keep paying until you pay off the back support you owe

### What if You Disagree with a Decision?

- If you disagree with a CSEA decision modifying an original CSEA order, you can **request an administrative review.**
- If you disagree with a CSEA modification decision on a Juvenile or Domestic Relations Court support order, you can **appeal to the appropriate court.**
- If you disagree with a court magistrate’s decision, you can **ask the judge to review your case.**

### When is a Support Change Effective?

- At CSEA, **usually** the change is effective the first day of the month after a pre-set review date no matter when the final decision is made. The review date normally is about 60 days after you file your modification request.
- At Domestic Relations Court, the modification is effective as of the date of filing **of the motion to modify.**
- At Juvenile Court, the modification is effective as of the filing date.
- However, at both courts, the effective date depends on the circumstances of each case.
- **CSEA will continue to collect your current support obligation until a decision is made on your request to modify child support.**