

CONNECTING THE DOTS:
TAFDC, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE, DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, AND
CHILD SUPPORT

CHILD SUPPORT IS



a way for parents who don't live together to share financial responsibility for their child



a positive factor in children's health, development, and behavior



tax-free for state and federal income tax purposes



collected for 1 in 5 children across the country



better for economic mobility than TAFDC, which sets time, income and asset limits

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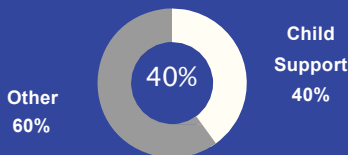
THERE ARE TWO RULES

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While you get TAFDC, the state of Massachusetts is required to keep a portion of the child support collected. This is called Assignment. But, you will get \$50 if your monthly child support is \$50 or more and the other parent pays. This is in addition to TAFDC.

With few exceptions, a TAFDC client must have a child support case. When you apply for TAFDC, you agree to help DTA and DOR to establish one. This is called Cooperation. Not cooperating, without an exception can mean a denial or lowering of your TAFDC benefits.

There are safety exceptions to this rule called Good Cause. If you are in a domestic violence situation or have safety concerns, talk to your case manager. They can refer you to a DTA Domestic Violence Specialist to discuss what is best for your family. Good Cause can be claimed at any time during the process, including after you agreed to cooperate. You can remove Good Cause at any time in the process if your situation changes and you can cooperate.



Some families get child support as a cash payment. For these families, the payments make up almost half of the family's income.



Some families get child support in the form of healthcare coverage. Health care helps children stay healthy and growing. This makes it easier for parents to work, earn money, and take care of themselves and their kids.

HERE IS THE SUPPORT PROCESS



Good Cause: You may not have to cooperate if you have experienced domestic violence, verify it may cause you or your child physical or emotional harm, your child was conceived as a result of incest or rape, or your child is being placed for adoption. Tell your case manager about a good cause reason at any time and if you need help verifying it.



Assignment: when you sign over your rights to child support to DTA, agree to send any payments to DOR, and give DTA information (e.g., name, DOB, SSN, address) about your child's other parent. If you do not have good cause, not cooperating can mean a denial or lowering of your TAFDC benefits.



Cooperation: when, within a week after your TAFDC case is approved, you get a welcome letter from DOR telling you what to do next. You may have to fill out forms or appear in court to help DOR establish who your child's other legal parent is and get, change, or enforce an order. Your TAFDC benefits may get lowered if you don't do what DOR asks.



The Order: when the judge orders your child's other parent to pay a certain amount of money per month or directs his/her employer to cover your child through their health insurance plan. This is different from a custody agreement or parenting plan.



Payments: which are collected by DOR. The first \$50 goes to you, the rest is kept by the state for as long as you get TAFDC. Once the payments add up to more than your TAFDC benefit, DTA will close your case and DOR will send you the full payments directly.



DTA wants children to have the support of both parents. When children have both parents involved in their lives, they are more successful as adults. DOR will ask the court to make sure that any child support order is fair and in your child's best interest.

