

CONNECTING THE DOTS:  
TRANSITIONAL AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDANT CHILDREN (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 and income limits

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## THERE ARE TWO RULES

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While you get TAFDC, you must give your rights to direct financial and medical insurance support to the state of Massachusetts. This is called **Assignment**. If Massachusetts gets support money, you will get the first \$50 each month. This is in addition to TAFDC.

With few exceptions, when you receive TAFDC you 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 good cause 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, even after you agreed to cooperate. You can remove Good Cause at any time in the process if your situation changes and you can cooperate.



**Grandparents & other relative caregivers** can claim good cause from cooperating if you feel it is not in the best interest of the child in your care. Just let us know.



Some families get child support as a cash payment and these payments make up a large 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 are a relative caregiver, you have experienced domestic violence, or your child is being placed for adoption. You may need to provide proof of your situation. Tell your case manager about a good cause reason at any time and if you need help verifying it.



**Assignment:** when you give your rights to child support to Massachusetts, 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:** after your TAFDC case is approved, you will 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 their employer to cover your child through their health insurance plan. This is different from a custody agreement or parenting plan.



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



Child Support Flyer (Rev. 11/2021)  
02-915-1121-05

**When it is safe, children do best with 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.**

