

Remember, your child support order does not change just because you are unemployed - only the court can modify your order!

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### **Does DOR Offer Any Job Placement Services?**

The Child Support Enforcement Division's Outreach Program is dedicated to enhancing and expanding job opportunities and responsible fatherhood programs for parents who pay child support. The "Jobs" section of our website, [www.mass.gov/cse](http://www.mass.gov/cse) has links to various employment resources, skills training, and job postings in Massachusetts. Here you'll also find a link to DUA where you can access a host of employment assistance programs and resources.



Department of Revenue  
Child Support Enforcement Division  
Customer Service Bureau  
P.O. Box 7057  
Boston, MA 02204

(800) 332-2733  
TDD/TTY (800) 255-5587  
Local Callers: (617) 660-1234

[www.mass.gov/cse](http://www.mass.gov/cse)

## **Unemployed and Paying Child Support?**



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

*CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT DIVISION*

## **I am unemployed. What happens to my child support obligation?**

Your child support obligation remains in effect. This means you must continue making payments in the same amount and frequency (e.g., weekly, monthly) specified in your court order. In addition, any past due child support remains owed and is not affected by your unemployment.

However, there are options available to you to help lessen the impact of unemployment on your child support obligation and help ensure your children continue to receive the financial support they depend on. This brochure outlines these options and provides additional information to assist you in dealing with unemployment and your child support obligation.

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## **Apply for Unemployment Benefits**

Don't delay, apply right away! Find out if you are eligible for Unemployment Compensation benefits. In Massachusetts, unemployment benefits are administered by the Division of Career Services/ Division of Unemployment Assistance (DUA). You can visit their website at [www.detma.org](http://www.detma.org) or call for more information at (617) 626-6800 (or (877) 626-6800 if calling from outside the 617 and 781 area codes).

If you receive unemployment benefits and have a child support order, DUA will deduct your child support directly from your benefits and forward it to DOR. DUA is authorized by law to deduct up to 50 percent of your unemployment benefits to satisfy your child support obligation.



**Need unemployment benefits? Don't delay, apply right away!**

In many instances, unemployment benefits can cover your child support obligation, ensuring you do not fall behind. However, if withholding 50 percent of your benefits is not enough to pay your current support order, you must make payments directly to DOR to cover the balance of your order. Otherwise, you will accrue a past due balance and will be subject to enforcement actions.

## **What if I can no longer afford to pay my child support order amount?**

You may ask the court to adjust your child support order while you are unemployed. DOR can assist you with going to court to ask for a modification of your order. Remember, only the court can change the amount of your child support order. To get an estimate of the amount of money a court may order for child support based on your current financial condition, try using our Child Support Calculation Worksheet on our website [www.mass.gov/cse](http://www.mass.gov/cse) (Click on "Guidelines"). We recommend you use this online worksheet to see if a modification would be called for based on your unemployment.

If you want our help in going to court to ask for a modification, you can call us to get the forms you need. We will review all the information you provide and information we have. If we agree a modification might be appropriate, we will file the forms for you, serve the other parent, and schedule a court hearing. You also have the right to retain your own lawyer to pursue a modification.