

Frequently Asked Questions about **Child Support**

Child Support ensures that children receive the financial support they need from both parents. This FAQ provides clear answers to common questions about how Child Support works and what to do if problems arise.

Who can apply for child support in North Carolina?

Any custodial parent, guardian, or caretaker of a child can apply for child support. Noncustodial parents can also apply to establish child support orders.

How is the amount of child support determined?

North Carolina and South Carolina use a state-specific Child Support Guidelines. Said guidelines factor in both parents' incomes, the number of children, and child custody arrangements.

Can child support be modified?

Yes. Either parent can request a modification if there is a substantial change in financial circumstances, such as a job loss, change in physical custody, or change in the financial needs of the child.

Does child support cover health costs or childcare?

The court may order one or both parents to contribute to health insurance premiums, medical expenses, and childcare costs in addition to the base child support amount.

How long does child support last?

Child support typically continues until the child turns 18 or graduation from high school, whichever is later. However, there are exceptions.

What if the other parent does not pay?

Child support orders can be enforced through a variety of means including wage garnishment, tax refund interception, license suspension, contempt, and even jail.

What if the other parent lives in another state?

Child Support obligations remain enforceable even if the parents reside in different states. Child Support Enforcement or the local domestic courts can assist.

What if I have a joint custody arrangement?

Joint physical custody does not negate the need for child support, rather it is one of the factors in the child support calculation. One parent may still owe child support to the other parent, even with equal parenting time arrangements.

