

SUPPORT AND GOOD CAUSE NOTICE

To receive Cash Assistance, you are required to cooperate in establishing the paternity of your child and in obtaining support for that child. However, the Department of Public Welfare will excuse you from cooperating with support requirements where there are good cause circumstances that make it dangerous or inappropriate to file for support.

In order to make an informed decision about whether to pursue support or claim good cause, parents will need to weigh the benefits of support against possible safety risks.

Benefits of Establishing Paternity and Obtaining Support

- It may increase your family's total income and may provide health insurance.
- Establishing paternity may help your child become eligible for future benefits from the other parent, such as an inheritance, U.S. Military and Veteran's Benefits, Social Security Benefits, or Life Insurance.

What is considered *Good Cause* for not filing for support?

Domestic Violence Good Cause Circumstances

If Pursuing Support:

- makes it more difficult for you or a family member to escape domestic violence,
or
- places you or a family member at risk of further violence,
or
- unfairly penalizes you or a family member because of domestic violence.

Rape, Incest or Adoption - Good Cause circumstances include:

- the child was born as a result of rape or incest.
- court proceedings are ongoing for adoption of the child or the parent is working with an agency that is helping to decide whether or not the child should be placed for adoption.

Requirements that may present safety risks

- The custodial parent of the child will be asked to provide information to help locate the other parent.
- If the parents are not married, paternity must be established.
- It is necessary to go to court to obtain a support order or to enforce a support order.
- Court papers, with the names and addresses of both parents, will be sent to each party.
- Both parents will be required to attend conferences and hearings.

Domestic Violence includes physical, sexual and mental abuse.

For example: mental abuse includes but is not limited to: stalking, threats to kidnap, kill or otherwise harm people or do damage to property, threats to commit suicide, repeated use of degrading or coercive language, controlling access to or withholding food, sleep, or medical care, and controlling or withholding access to money or credit cards and denying contact with friends and/or family.

(See the reverse side for more information)

CLIENT COPY

CAO COPY

How and when to request Good Cause.

For a request based on domestic violence you will need to complete the domestic violence verification form (PA 1747) and do one of the following:

- Check section two of the form and attach any domestic violence papers, including law enforcement, court, medical, social service, child protective services, psychological records or other records;
- or
- Ask any person who knows about the domestic violence to sign section three of the form. This could be anyone, such as: counselor, social worker, medical or psychological provider, shelter or hotline worker, police or probation officer, a legal representative, an acquaintance, friend, relative or neighbor;
- or
- If you cannot get documents or a third party statement, sign section four of the form stating that domestic violence prevents you from cooperating with the support requirements.

For a request based on rape or incest:

- You may fill out the Domestic Violence Verification Form (PA 1747) as described above
- or
- You may fill out the Good Cause Based on Factors other than Domestic Violence Form (PA/CS 173GC) and give us court, law enforcement, medical, protective services or psychological records or birth certificate to show the child was born as a result of rape or incest, or the statement of any person who knows about the rape or incest.

For a good cause request based on adoption, you may complete the form for Good Cause Based on Factors other than Domestic Violence (PA/CS 173GC) and give us Court papers or other records from a social service agency that show that you are considering adoption for the child, or that a legal process for adoption has started.

GOOD CAUSE CAN BE REQUESTED AT ANY TIME.

Addressing safety risks

For parents who have safety risks but wish to pursue support, the support process provides the following:

- The Domestic Relations Section (DRS) or Family Court can place a Family Violence Indicator on your file to stop the release of information about you or your family’s address to other persons. A Family Violence Indicator may be placed on your file if a Protection From Abuse Order has been entered or the release of the information concerning your address may result in physical or emotional harm to you or your family.
- The DRS or Family Court may provide safeguards for both individuals and records if domestic violence is reported. Each county has different safety options and procedures available.
- The Address Confidentiality Program can be used to keep your address confidential when you move to avoid the perpetrator. You must apply in person at a local domestic violence, sexual assault, or victim service program. For assistance call 800-563-6399.

Talk to the DRS or Family Court staff if you have safety concerns.

To process support, the DRS needs information about all parties to the support action. The parent(s), caretaker, and/or spouse must provide as much of the following information that is reasonably obtainable:

- Names, current addresses, dates of birth, and social security numbers of the parties.
- Children’s social security numbers, dates of birth, and birth certificates.
- Name and address of the health insurance company.
- Name and address of employers and most recent paystubs and tax return.
- Dates of marriage, separation, and/or divorce and copies of any separation/divorce documents if the parents are or were married.

SIGNATURES	
I have read and understand this notice regarding support requirements and my right to claim good cause. _____ SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT/RECIPIENT	I have explained the information contained in this notice and have provided the applicant/recipient with a copy of this notice. _____ SIGNATURE OF WORKER