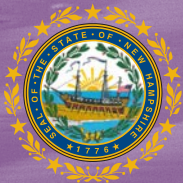




New Hampshire CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES



*Supporting Families
with Children*



Child Support Dictionary

ARREARAGES – Child support that was not paid when due

BCSS – Bureau of Child Support Services

CHILD SUPPORT – A way for parents to share the responsibility of providing financial and medical support for their child

CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES – A calculation table available on the BCSS website, which provides guideline support amounts based upon the income and expenses of both parents

CHILD SUPPORT ORDER – A court or administrative order for the amount of child and medical support to be paid

CURRENT SUPPORT – The ongoing dollar amount the Obligor pays the Obligee as stated in a legal order

DEBIT CARD – A NH Child Support Debit Card issued to Obligees by a BCSS vendor as one of three methods to disburse payments

DHHS OR DEPARTMENT – Department of Health and Human Services

EFT – Electronic Fund Transfer, also known as Direct Deposit, is one of three methods to disburse payments

INTERGOVERNMENTAL/INTERSTATE CASE – A case in which BCSS works with another state or country's child support agency to establish or enforce a court order when a parent responsible for paying child support resides in another state or country

LIEN – A legal claim against personal or real property to pay child support arrearages

MEDICAID – State health care assistance

MEDICAL SUPPORT ORDER – A court or administrative order to provide health insurance, and/or an on-going monetary sum toward health care costs for dependent children

OBLIGEE – The person that receives child support payments

OBLIGOR – The person obligated to pay child support

PATERNITY – The establishment of a child's father, legally

PATERNITY TEST – Genetic test to determine the biological father of a child

REASONABLE COST OF MEDICAL SUPPORT – NH-state law defines as four (4) percent of a parent's gross income

SDU – State Disbursement Unit which receives, records and disburses child support payments to a payee

TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Cash Assistance)

Introduction

This brochure explains child support services. These services are available even if one of the parents lives in another state or country, and include:

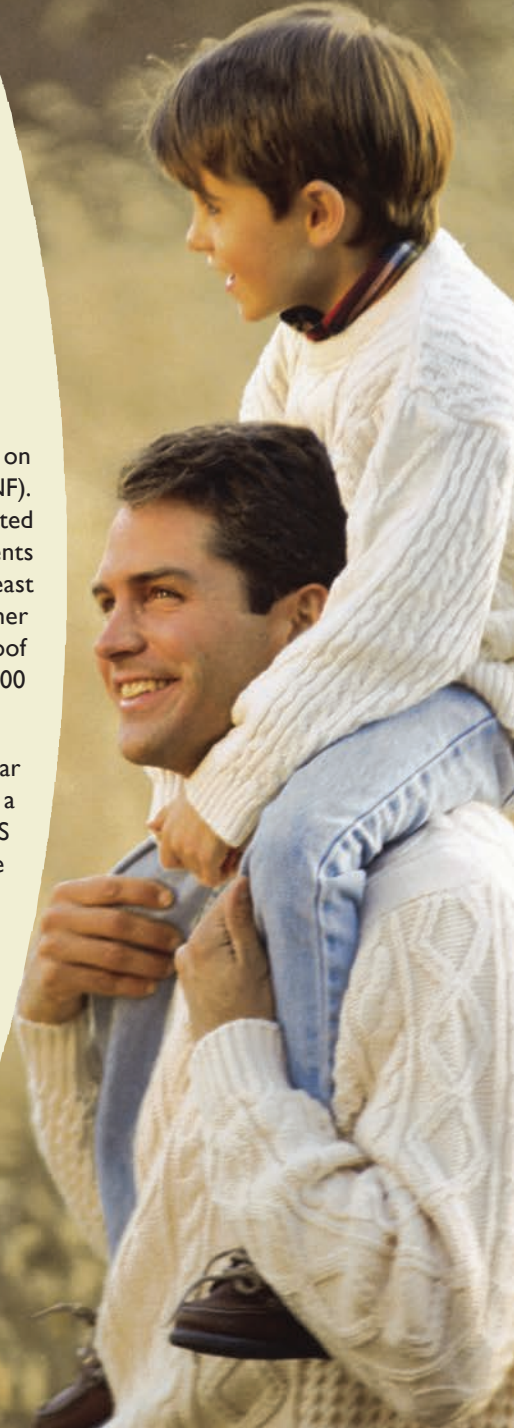
- Locating a responsible parent
- Determining paternity for a child
- Establishing and enforcing a financial and medical child support order
- Collecting, distributing, and monitoring child support payments
- Reviewing an order to see if it continues to meet guideline amounts

BCSS deducts a \$35.00 annual service fee from child support collected on behalf of all dependents who have never received Public Assistance (TANF). BCSS charges the fee only after a minimum of \$550.00 has been collected and disbursed. If an Obligee has multiple cases in which the dependents have never received TANF, BCSS will charge for each case with at least \$550.00 in disbursements. If an Obligee has received TANF from another state or tribal jurisdiction, he or she must inform BCSS and provide proof of his or her receipt of TANF. BCSS will not charge that Obligee a \$35.00 annual service fee.

BCSS assesses the fee each year during the federal fiscal year (not calendar year), which runs from October 1 to September 30. If an Obligee paid a fee to another State or tribal jurisdiction, he or she must inform BCSS and provide proof of his or her fee payment. BCSS will not charge the Obligee a \$35.00 annual service fee for the current federal fiscal year.

According to federal and state law, BCSS may charge fees for any of the services it provides, for example, services related to payment processing, case maintenance, IRS intercept, and/or the establishment or enforcement of court orders, etc. For more information regarding BCSS service-related fees, visit the BCSS website at www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcass/.

All cases administered by BCSS must contain a provision for medical support. Medical support is the obligation of either or both parents to provide health insurance and/or cash medical support for their dependents when that insurance is available at reasonable cost.





What to expect

BCSS will work to ensure that both parents are treated fairly, kept informed as appropriate, and that their concerns are recognized.

In NH, the court establishes the child support order, including decisions on where the children will reside. BCSS will enforce your financial and medical child support order only. Custody and visitation issues are between the parents and the court. BCSS will send collected child support directly to the Obligee identified in the order. While BCSS will use the tools available to enforce Child Support, we may not always be successful. A great deal of our success relies upon the quality and timeliness of the information you provide to us.

The BCSS attorney and/or Child Support representative assigned to your case represents the NH Department of Health and Human Services and does not represent you, the other party, of the child(ren). BCSS can explain court process to you and help you understand the paperwork, but we cannot give you legal advice. For the most effective case management, BCSS must and will decide what actions to take. If you do not agree with a BCSS decision, you have the right to hire your own attorney or represent yourself.

Obligors generally pay child support until the youngest child turns 18 or graduates from high school, whichever occurs last. Child support will also end when a child joins the military or marries.

If one parent lives in another state or country, the BCSS Interstate Child Support Unit may be able to work with the other state or country's child support agency to establish and enforce a child support order.

Locating a parent

You can help BCSS locate a parent by giving as much information as possible to your child support worker, such as:

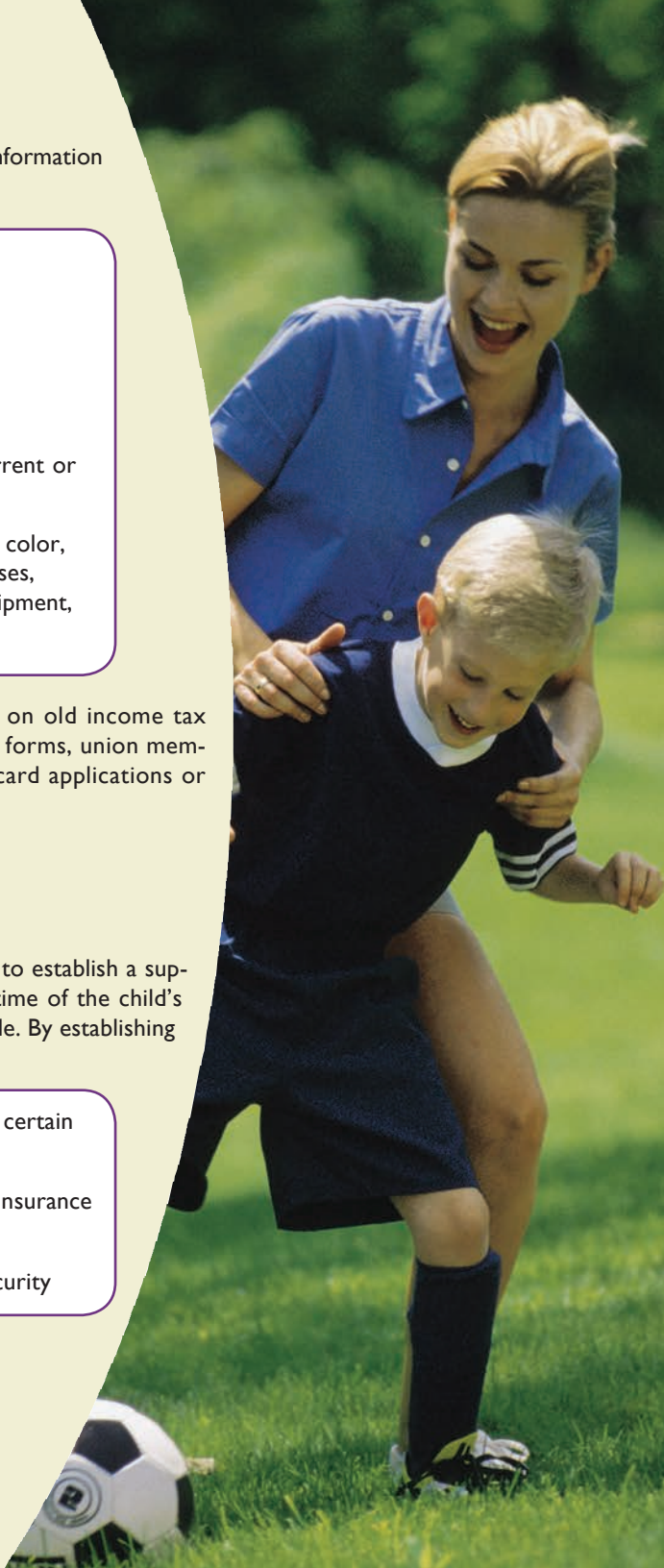
- Name and nicknames
- Social Security Number and date of birth
- Previous addresses
- Bank and credit union accounts
- Names and addresses of family, friends, and current or previous employers
- Property and assets such as cars (make, model, color, year, license plate state and number), land, houses, boats, snowmobiles, business property and equipment, and other valuables

You can find some of the above-listed information on old income tax returns, bank statements, paycheck stubs, insurance forms, union membership cards, driver's licenses, and loan or credit card applications or statements.

Determining paternity

BCSS must be able to prove who the child's father is to establish a support order. If the parents were not married at the time of the child's birth, it is best to establish paternity as early as possible. By establishing paternity your child benefits:

- Financially, through qualifying for child support, certain disability benefits, and inheritance rights
- Medically, through rights to the father's health insurance benefits and information about his health
- Emotionally, through a sense of identity and security





To determine paternity, BCSS will need information about the child's father and the relationship between the parents at the time of the child's conception or birth. If a Birth Certificate does not name the father of a child, BCSS must provide proof of paternity and may use genetic testing to do so. If genetic testing is required, in most instances, the mother, possible father and the child provide DNA samples to determine whether a biological father-child relationship exists. A medical professional collects the samples by means of a simple and painless swab of the mouth with a long "Q-tip."

Affidavit of Paternity

When the child's parents are unmarried and want to establish paternity they can do so in court or they can complete an Affidavit of Paternity. The Affidavit of Paternity is a simple way for unmarried parents to establish paternity for their child. For more information, contact any birthing hospital, town or city clerk's office, or a BCSS District Office.

Establishing an order

Once paternity is determined, BCSS will work to establish a legal order for support in court. Both parents' income and ability to pay, and access to health insurance for their child(ren), will be factors used to determine an appropriate child support amount.

Usually, when a court order is established, one parent will be required to pay child support in the amount and frequency stated in the order. BCSS sends collected child support payments to the Obligee the same business day BCSS receives the payment.

Child Support Guidelines

BCSS calculates the amount of current child support according to the New Hampshire Child Support Guidelines, as set by NH law in keeping with current federal tax structures. The court will usually order the calculated amount, unless it finds that the amount would be unjust or inappropriate due to special circumstances.

If you believe your financial circumstances supports an amount different from the recommended Guideline amount, be certain to bring supporting documentation to the court hearing.

Enforcing an order

Most child support payments are paid through income assignment where a portion of the Obligor's paycheck is withheld and sent to the BCSS State Disbursement Unit (SDU). The SDU processes and sends the money to the Obligee electronically by one of the following three options: 1) direct deposit into Obligee's bank account (checking or savings account), or 2) direct deposit to a Debit Card account provided to the Obligee by a BCSS-contracted vendor, or 3) by check, if requested. When a case opens for enforcement, the BCSS-contracted vendor will provide the Obligee information regarding these options and include an enrollment form so that s/he can select a preferred option. Failure to return the enrollment form within thirty (30) days will default to payment disbursement by Debit Card.

When payments are 1) not paid; 2) not paid on time; or 3) not paid in full (according to the court order), BCSS may take enforcement action. It is important that you understand that BCSS or the court, not the Obligee, decides the type and level of enforcement action.

To enforce payment of arrearages, BCSS may:

File liens against an Obligor's personal & real property -

Includes financial accounts, real estate holdings, etc.

Intercept an Obligor's tax refunds – BCSS receives

Tax return money directly for appropriate disbursement

Inform Credit Bureaus – Provide the amount of the arrearages to credit bureaus

Take a portion of an Obligor's Unemployment Compensation Benefits

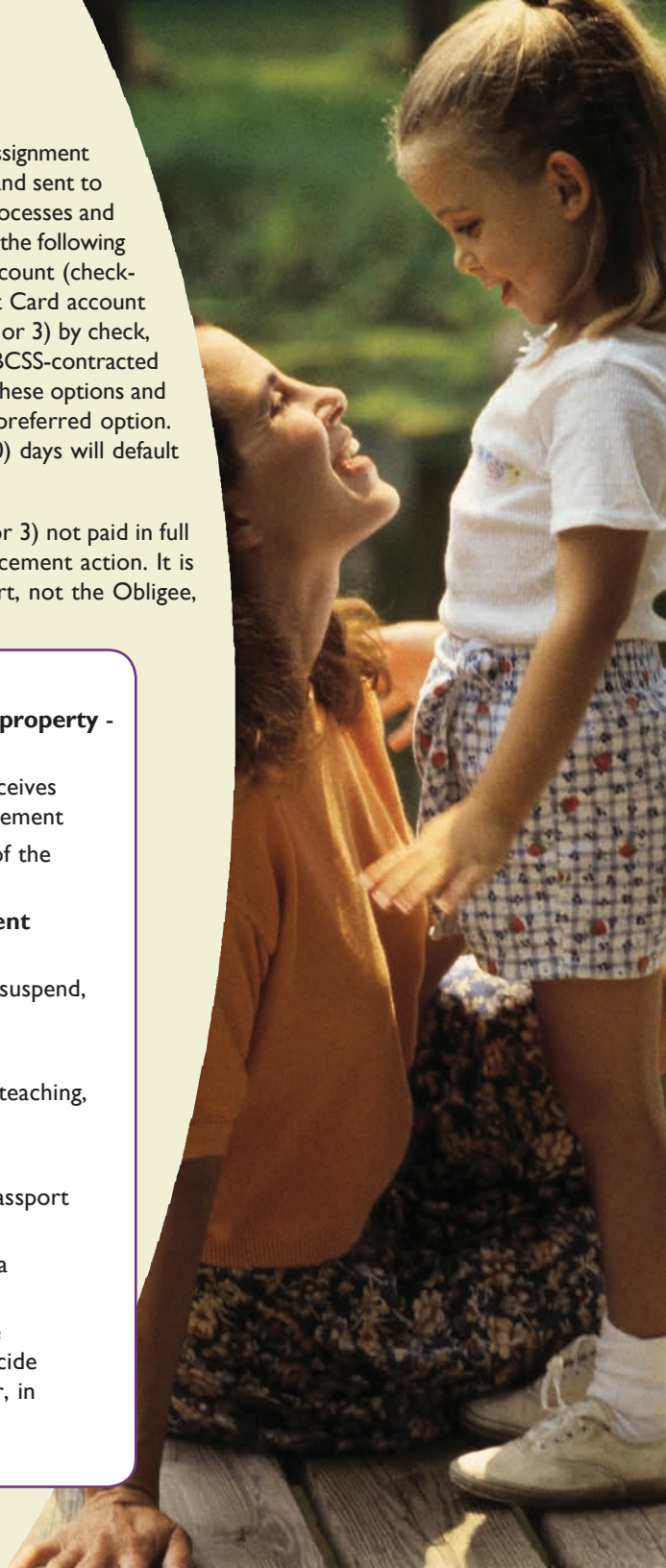
Suspend a license – Notify a licensing board to suspend, deny, or take back an Obligor's license, including:

- Driver's
- Occupational/Professional (medical, plumbing, teaching, cosmetology, etc.)
- Sporting (hunting and fishing)

Request passport denial – Notify the federal passport agency to deny issuing a passport

Intercept lottery prizes – Take the portion of a lottery prize equal to the amount of the arrearage

Schedule a Court hearing – BCSS presents the arrearage history to the court for the judge to decide next steps that may include immediate payment or, in certain cases, incarceration based on the Obligor's ability to pay.



Modifying your order

Either parent may request BCSS to petition the Court review their child support order and determine if the order can be raised or lowered, based on the NH Guidelines. Upon written request, BCSS will request the Court review your order if:

- It has been three (3) years since your order was issued or a court order ruled on a modification request, or
- Medical support, including a reasonable cost of health care coverage, is not included or appropriately addressed in your current order, or
- There is a substantial change in circumstances.

If you wish for BCSS to petition the Court to review your order, you must apply for child support services (see the “Applying for Child Support Services” section).

You must also submit a written request to BCSS as follows:

- 1) Submit a written request with your application or to your BCSS case worker (please include the other party’s and your name and BCSS case ID [if you have one] on your request)
- 2) Email BCSS at bcss-ciu@dhhs.nh.gov and request a review (include your Case ID and the other party’s name in the email); or
- 3) Request a review through your case’s e-childsupport account (see “NH e-childsupport” section for more information)

Mandatory review for TANF & Medicaid cases

Federal regulations require BCSS review any order when financial assistance and some types of medical assistance are being provided for the child(ren) named in the order, if any of the following apply:

When BCSS determines an order is eligible for mandatory review BCSS will 1) provide notice to the Obligee and Obligor and 2) require the Obligee and Obligor provide current financial and/or health insurance information, appear at, and participate in scheduled hearings.



Incarceration

BCSS will automatically initiate review of child support orders without the specific need for an Obligor's request, upon learning that the Obligor is expected to be incarcerated for more than 180 days.

TANF and Medicaid

If you receive TANF cash assistance with Medicaid or Medicaid-Only, you must:

- Assign your rights to child/spousal support and/or medical support. – When you receive TANF with Medicaid, BCSS has the authority to collect and keep your support payments as reimbursement for assistance provided
- Cooperate with BCSS – To locate the other parent, establish paternity if not already established, and establish and enforce an order for child/medical support

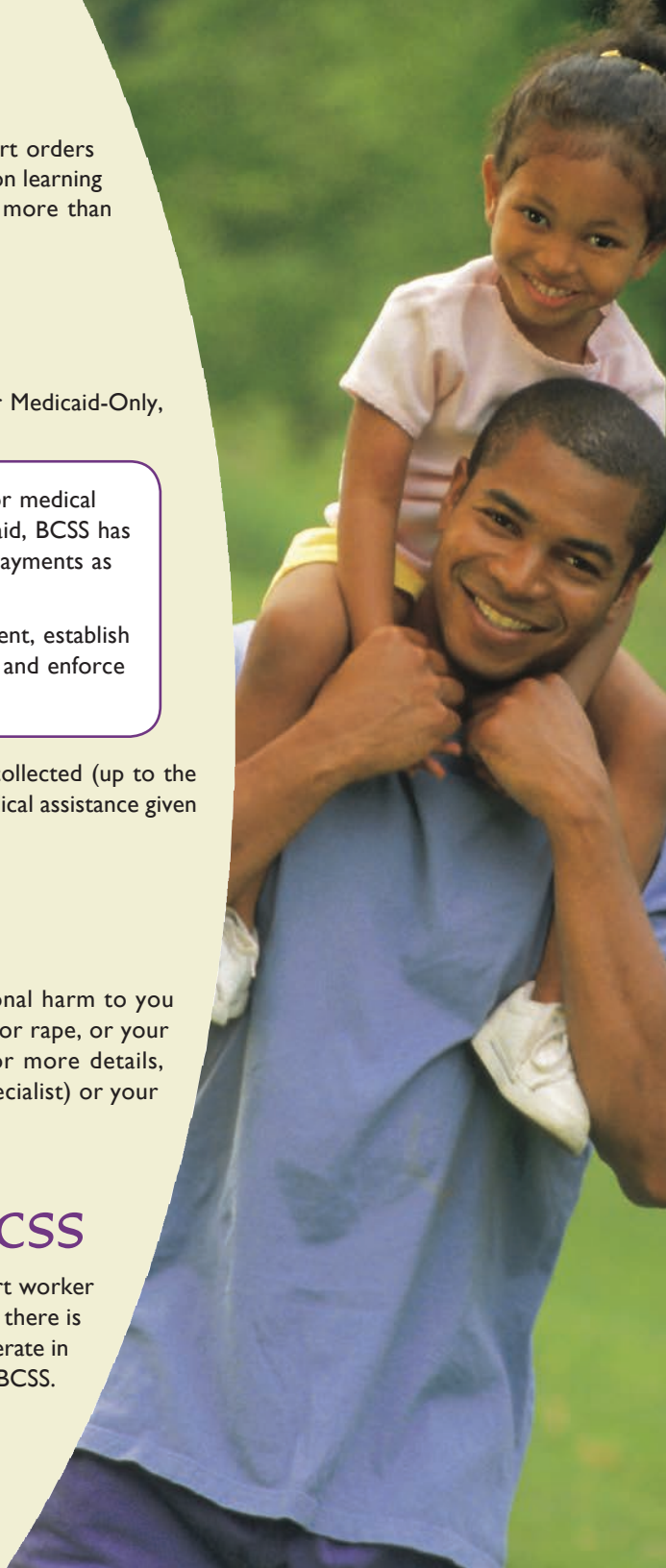
The state and federal government may use support collected (up to the amount of assistance spent) to repay the cash and medical assistance given to you and your child.

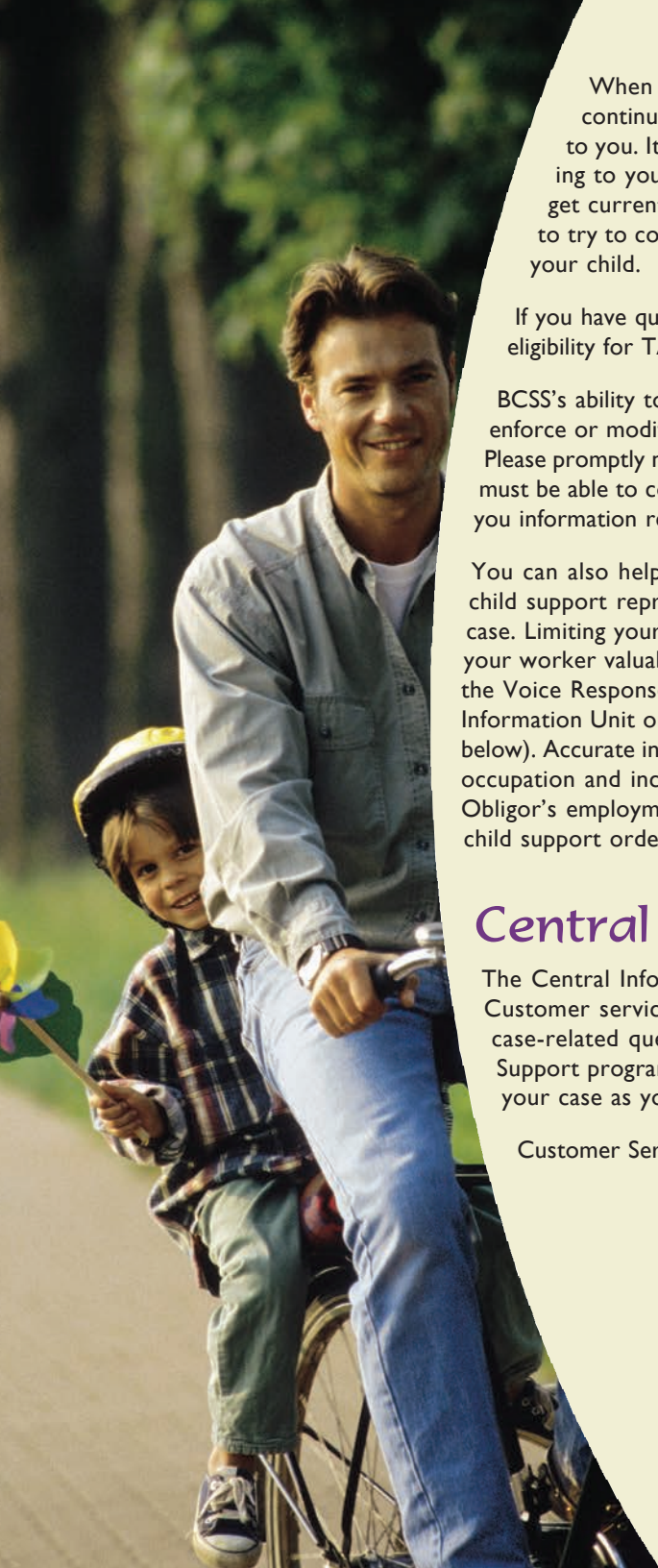
GOOD CAUSE

If working with BCSS may cause physical or emotional harm to you or your child, or your child was conceived by incest or rape, or your child was adopted, you can claim "good cause." For more details, contact your TANF Family Services Specialist (FS Specialist) or your child support worker.

COOPERATION WITH BCSS

You must tell your FS Specialist and your child support worker if you receive support directly from the Obligor and if there is any change in the amount you receive. You must cooperate in making your child support payments payable through BCSS.





When you stop receiving TANF cash assistance, BCSS will continue to send current support payments received by BCSS to you. It usually takes a few weeks for payments to start coming to you after your TANF case closes. However, even if you get current support payments directly, BCSS may also continue to try to collect any state and federal assistance given to you and your child.

If you have questions about how child support payments affect your eligibility for TANF or Medicaid, contact your FS Specialist.

BCSS's ability to locate a parent, establish paternity and support, and enforce or modify an order depends on current verifiable information. Please promptly notify BCSS if your address or telephone changes. BCSS must be able to contact you to complete necessary forms or to provide you information regarding payments or a child support order.

You can also help by being patient as your child support attorney or child support representative decides and takes suitable action on your case. Limiting your calls to BCSS to those that provide updates permits your worker valuable time. If you want payment information, please call the Voice Response System first at 800 371-2244, then call the Central Information Unit or email BCSS (see "Central Information Unit" section below). Accurate information about the Obligor's address, phone number, occupation and income can all affect enforcement activity. Further, the Obligor's employment status effects his or her ability to comply with a child support order.

Central Information Unit (CIU)

The Central Information Unit (CIU) is the central contact for BCSS. Customer service representatives work with you to answer specific case-related questions as well as general questions about the Child Support program. Customer Service representatives will also update your case as your address or employer changes.

Customer Service representatives are available:

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

From 8:00 AM to 4:15 PM at:

**800 852-3345 x 4427
or 603 271- 4427**

**Fax: 603 271- 4787
or**

e-mail BCSS at:

bcss-ciu@dhhs.nh.gov



Online Access

Your Child Support Case Information is accessible online! Register to access your case at: <https://e-childsupport.dhhs.nh.gov/customer>.

Once registered you can:

- View Payment Information
- Provide updated information
- View appointments
- Email questions and requests to your case worker

Voice Response System

Also available is a 24 hour, 7 day a week Voice Response System at 800 371-8844. When you call this number, you will can access current and past payment information for your child support case. The information, also available in Spanish, includes:

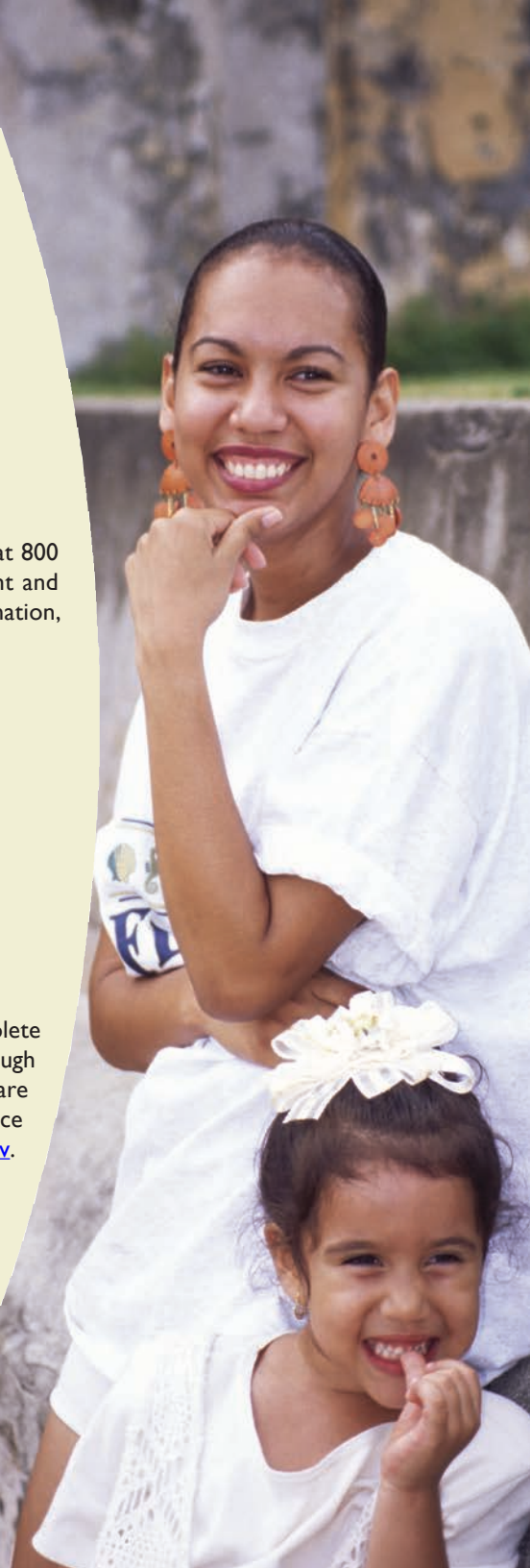
- Last month's summary balance and arrearages owed
- Last five payments
- Last payment received
- Date of the last payment

Applying for Child Support Services

If you would like to apply for child support services, you must complete an application. Even when the court orders your support payable through BCSS, you must still complete an application to BCSS. Applications are available from the Central Information Unit and at the district office nearest you, or by contacting BCSS by email at bcss-ciu@dhhs.nh.gov.

Download the application off the BCSS website at <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcsc/forms.htm> or the NH Easy website at <https://nheasy.nh.gov/#/forms/>. See the back page of this brochure for the addresses and phone numbers of all the district offices.

If the Court orders child support payable directly to the Obligee, BCSS can only provide child support services under certain circumstances, such as when a one-month arrearage exists. For further information, contact the Central Information Unit.



Child Support District Offices

BERLIN DISTRICT OFFICE

650 Main Street, Suite 200
Berlin, NH 03570
603 752-7800 or 800 972-6111
Fax: 603 752-3208

CLAREMONT DISTRICT OFFICE

17 Water Street, Suite 301
Claremont, NH 03743
603 542-9544 or 800 982-1001
Fax: 603 543-8918

CONCORD DISTRICT OFFICE

40 Terrill Park Drive
Concord, NH 03301
603 271-3604 or 800 322-9191
Fax: 603 271-6206

CONWAY DISTRICT OFFICE

71 Hobbs Street
Conway, NH 03818
603 447-3841 or 800 552-4628
Fax: 603 447-1988

INTERSTATE UNIT BUREAU OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

129 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
603 271-4431 or 800 852-3345 Ext. 4431
Fax: 603 271-4771

KEENE DISTRICT OFFICE

111 Key Road
Keene, NH 03431
603 357-3510 or 800 624-9700
Fax: 603 355-1542

LACONIA DISTRICT OFFICE

65 Beacon Street West
Laconia, NH 03246
603 524-4485 or 800 322-2121
Fax: 603 528-1652

LITTLETON DISTRICT OFFICE

80 North Littleton Road
Littleton, NH 03561
603 444-6786 or 800 552-8959
Fax: 603 444-0348

MANCHESTER DISTRICT OFFICE

1050 Perimeter Road, Suite 501
Manchester, NH 03103
603 668-2330 or 800 852-7493
Fax: 603 668-4218

ROCHESTER DISTRICT OFFICE

150 Wakefield Street, Suite 22
Rochester, NH 03867
603 332-9120 or 800 862-5300
Fax: 603 332-5204

SEACOAST DISTRICT OFFICE

19 Rye Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801
603 334-4323 or 800 821-0326
Fax: 603 559-8495

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OFFICE

26 Whipple Street
Nashua NH 03060
603 883-7726 or 800 852-0632
Fax: 603 883-0528

NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
BUREAU OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES
129 PLEASANT STREET
CONCORD, NH 03301
603 271-4427 OR 800 852-3345 EXT. 4427
FAX 603 271-4787



bcss-ciu@dhhs.nh.gov
www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcss/

02/22
DCSS s77K
BCSS PR 22-03