

137-055-6025

Distribution of Support Payments to Private Collection Agencies

(1) For purposes of this rule, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Collection agency" means a collection agency as defined by ORS 697.005;

(b) "Enforcement action" means any action taken by a collection agency to ensure payment of support by an obligor, including but not limited to contact for the purposes of discussing payments by the collection agency in person or through mail, e-mail or telephone with the obligor, members of the obligor's household or the obligor's employer. "Enforcement action" does not mean investigative and locate services provided by a collection agency.

(c) "Legally entitled to" means support payments which the Division of Child Support (DCS) is required to distribute to the obligee pursuant to OAR 137-055-6010, but does not include support payments that DCS is required to distribute to the child attending school pursuant to ORS 107.108 and OAR 137-055-5110.

(2) When the Oregon Child Support Program (CSP) is notified by a collection agency or an obligee that the obligee has entered into an agreement with a collection agency, the administrator will send to the obligee an authorization form developed pursuant to section (7) of this rule.

(3) Before DCS may adjust the payment records and begin forwarding support payments to the collection agency pursuant to section (4) of this rule, the obligee must submit a signed and notarized authorization form to the CSP with the following information:

(a) The child support case number;

(b) The obligee's and obligor's full names;

(c) The names of the children on the child support case for whom the obligee is entitled to receive support; and

(d) The name and address of the collection agency to which payments should be sent.

(4) Upon receipt of a completed authorization form DCS will:

(a) Adjust the child support case record for disbursement of support payments to the collection agency. If support payments are currently being disbursed to a different collection agency, DCS will adjust the child support case record for disbursement of support payments to the collection agency for which the obligee has most recently provided authorization;

(b) Send the notice developed pursuant to subsection (7)(b) of this rule to the other parties;

(c) Credit the obligor's account for the full amount of each support payment received by DCS; and

(d) Disburse support payments received, to which the obligee is legally entitled, to the collection agency.

(5)(a) DCS may stop disbursing support payments to a collection agency and reinstate disbursements to the obligee if:

(A) The obligee notifies the CSP that the agreement with the collection agency has been terminated;

(B) The obligee requests that the CSP stop disbursing support payments to the collection agency;

(C) The administrator is made aware that the collection agency is not in compliance with the provisions of section (8) of this rule; or

(D) The Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) notifies the Department of Justice that the collection agency is in violation of its rules.

(b) DCS will stop disbursing child support payments to the collection agency only after the child support case record has been adjusted following the date that notification from the obligee was received or the date the administrator is otherwise made aware that the collection agency is not in compliance with section (8) of this rule or rules adopted by DCBS. DCS will, at no time, be responsible for returning support payments to the obligee that were disbursed to the collection agency prior to the child support case record having been adjusted following the date that notification from the obligee was received.

(6) The administrator may use information disclosed by the collection agency to provide support enforcement services under ORS 25.080.

(7) The CSP will develop:

(a) An authorization form to be sent to an obligee when the obligee or the collection agency notifies CSP that the obligee has entered into an agreement with a collection agency. The form will include a notice to the obligee printed in type size equal to at least 12-point type that the obligee may be eligible for support enforcement services from the CSP without paying the interest or fee that is typically charged by a collection agency; and

(b) A form to be sent to the other parties to the case when DCS has been given

authorization by the obligee to disburse support payments to a collection agency.

(8) A collection agency to which the obligee has provided authorization for DCS to disburse support payments:

(a) May only provide investigative and locate services to the obligee unless written authorization is received from the administrator as provided in section (9) of this rule;

(b) May disclose relevant information from services provided under subsection (a) of this section to the administrator for purposes of providing support enforcement services under ORS 25.080;

(c) May not charge interest or a fee for services exceeding 29 percent of each support payment received by the collection agency to which the obligee is legally entitled unless the collection agency, if allowed by the terms of the agreement between the collection agency and the obligee, hires an attorney to perform legal services on behalf of the obligee;

(d) Will include in the agreement with the obligee a notice that provides information on the fees, penalties, termination and duration of the agreement; and

(e) Will report in writing to DCS the full amount of any payment collected as a result of an enforcement action taken within ten days of disbursing the payment to the obligee.

(9) Upon request, the administrator may provide written authorization to the collection agency to initiate enforcement action to collect the support award. The authorization may:

(a) Authorize a specific enforcement action only; or

(b) Authorize any enforcement action until further notice from the administrator.

(10) A power of attorney given to a collection agency by an obligee does not change the rights and responsibilities of the parties or a collection agency as described in ORS 25.020 or this rule.

(11) The administrator will not disclose any information from a child support record to a collection agency except as permitted in OAR 137-055-1140.

Stat. Auth.: ORS 25.020; 180.345

Stats. Implemented: ORS 25.020

Effective: January 2, 2007