

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT COOPERATION WITH CHILD SUPPORT

**Child Support Service (CSS) can help you:** When your cash assistance ends (TANF), you may receive child support income through CSS. If you have Child Care Assistance or Food Assistance, child support income must be sent to you.

### To Avoid a Non-Cooperation Penalty, You Must:

- Complete all CSS forms and keep all appointments. Give us documents when needed.
- Give information, as best you can, to find the child(ren)'s absent parent(s).
- Help us establish and enforce orders for child support.
- Appear in court when needed.
- Help when paternity (who the father is) must be established. Turn over to DCF all child support, support allotments, and alimony paid to you or any family member while receiving TANF.

### What To Do If You Have a Good Reason For Not Cooperating:

- If you receive an appointment letter and cannot come at the scheduled time, immediately call Child Support Services at 1-888-757-2445 and speak to a child support worker to reschedule your appointment.
- If you are afraid to seek child support because you or the child(ren) might be hurt in some way, tell your CSS or EES caseworker your reasons for being afraid. Your caseworker may be able to excuse you.
- If a child is in the process of being adopted, talk to your CSS caseworker

### What Happens If You Don't Cooperate?

You will receive a notice at least 10 days before the penalty begins. The notice will tell you about your appeal rights. Tell your CSS caseworker within 10 days of getting the notice if you had a good reason for not cooperating, and your assistance may be reinstated.

### Your TANF and CHILD CARE benefit will end for your entire family when you do not cooperate with CSS.

- The first time you do not cooperate, your cash and Child Care case will close for a minimum of three months.
- The second time you do not cooperate, your cash and Child Care case will be closed for a minimum of six months.
- The third time you do not cooperate, your cash and Child Care case will be closed for a minimum of one year.
- Any penalties after that will make you and your family ineligible for cash or childcare benefits for ten years.

**For FOOD ASSISTANCE, any adult household member who fails to cooperate with Child Support Services without good cause will be ineligible** for food assistance benefits until DCF determines the household member(s) has cooperated. The rest of your food assistance household can get benefits if otherwise eligible.

### How to Cooperate Once You Are Notified of a Penalty:

Contact Child Support Services, 1-888-757-2445. **Child Support Services** will explain what you need to do to cooperate. To cure your penalty, you must cooperate with Child Support Services and you cannot get TANF OR CHILD CARE benefits again until the end of the minimum penalty period.

### How to Appeal the Decision to Apply a Penalty:

- If you think you have a good reason for not cooperating, you may contact Child Support Customer Service, 1-888-757-2445 to speak with someone about cooperation.

**PLEASE NOTE: CASH BENEFITS ARE NOW LIMITED TO 24 MONTHS FOR A LIFE-TIME.**

This form supersedes form ES-3102, Rev. 7-16.