

worker is able to make accurate calculations that reflect the client's current income or to accurately determine an average monthly income in those cases where income fluctuates significantly. It is important for the client to understand that she is certifying the accuracy of the information when she signs the Application for Child Care Services ([DCD-0456](#)).

If the purchasing agency establishes local procedures for verifying a client's employment/income that call for information in addition to that required in this chapter, these procedures must be in writing, approved by the agency director, and posted where clients can read them.

VII. CHILD SUPPORT POLICY

All child support received or disbursed must be considered for initial and new applications and at redetermination. The child care worker determines if the child support payments are included in the family's total countable monthly income. The following situations will help the child care worker to determine income when child support is considered.

A. Child Support Deducted From Income

When a parent whose income is used in determining eligibility for child care services pays [child support](#), that amount is deducted from their countable monthly income. The amount must be verified through online verification, Automated Collections and Tracking System (ACTS), the clerk of court, a pay document/stub that shows wages garnished for child support, or a written, signed statement from the recipient. This policy does not include alimony payments.

B. Child Support Payments Received

When child support payments are received by a parent or responsible adult, the payments are included in the family's total countable monthly income. However, these payments may not be regular nor of identical amounts. The child care worker will use the amounts that the parent actually receives to determine an average amount received over a period of time. When calculating child support, the amount indicated in a court order or written agreement is not considered.

Verification of direct child support for families receiving FNS benefits must be obtained from FSIS. Information and verification of direct child support for families who do not receive FNS benefits can be obtained through online verification, ACTS, the clerk of court, check stubs provided by the client, or a statement signed by the absent parent. When the absent parent's statement cannot be obtained, the child care worker must document the reason in the family's case narrative. The child care worker must verify child support

income received through the client's signed statement or by documenting the client's verbal statement in the case narrative. For an example of a client's statement, refer to Chapter 4, Attachment 3.

The parent is not required to prove that she does not receive child support. However, the child care worker should encourage a parent whose child is not receiving child support to seek the assistance of the local Child Support Enforcement Office in obtaining child support payments from the absent parent. This assistance is not a condition of eligibility for receiving child care services.

In some cases a [major mother](#) receives child support for her child who is a [minor mother](#). The amount of child support that the major mother receives for the minor mother is not counted as income when determining the minor mother's eligibility for child care services.

C. Child Support at New Application

When a parent initially applies or a new application is completed for child care services, only the child support income received 30 days prior to the date of application can be counted. The payments for the 30 day period are added together and the total is included in the family's countable monthly income. If a lump sum payment is received within 30 days prior to the date of application, it is divided by twelve (12) months and the result is counted when determining the amount of income available to the family.

If the parent states that a specific amount of child support is received each month and it cannot be verified, the child care worker will accept the parent's statement and document it in the case record. The amount is then added to the family's total countable income.

D. Child Support at Redetermination

During the annual redetermination period, the child care worker must review all child support payments during the current eligibility period. Child support payments received, including lump sums, are not counted if they extend beyond the beginning of the current eligibility period. Regularly scheduled payments are added together and divided by the number of months reviewed. If the parent received a lump sum payment during the current eligibility period, the lump sum amount is divided by twelve (12). If the parent received a lump sum payment in addition to regularly scheduled payments, the average for the lump sum payments and the average for the regularly scheduled payments are added together and the result is added to the family's countable monthly income.

If the absent parent makes payments only several times a year to meet the annual amount due, a monthly average is counted in the countable

monthly income. All of the child support payments received for the current eligibility period are added together and divided by the number of months reviewed. The result is added to the family's countable monthly income.

NOTE: Follow the process in Section E when a parent indicates at redetermination that child support payments have stopped.

E. Changes in Child Support Payments

Child support payments may increase or decrease during the eligibility period. When a change in the amount of child support income occurs, the child care worker must review payments during the current eligibility period to determine the countable amount.

If a parent reports that child support payments have stopped and have not been received for at least thirty (30) days, the child care worker verifies the parent's statement and documents it in the case narrative. If the parent's statement cannot be verified through an established system used by the agency, the worker must document in the case narrative that the payments have stopped. In both instances, delete the child support income and recalculate the family's total countable monthly income and parent fee. The child care worker must issue a Child Care Action Notice (DCD-0450) to notify the parent and the provider of the change.

The child care worker should follow local procedures for periodic review of cases having child support that have stopped to determine if the payments have resumed. If the payments start again, the child care worker must review the payments for the current eligibility period to determine the countable amount. Refer to Example 4, Sporadic Child Support Payments.

Examples of Child Support Income

EXAMPLE 1, New Application: Carolyn applied for child care assistance for the first time. She is employed and receives child support for her two (2) children. She stated that she receives child support of \$100 per week through a court order for one of her children and the absent parent of her other child gives her \$200 each month. Online verification indicated that during the past 30 days, Carolyn received a total of \$400 for child support. The child care worker gets Carolyn to sign a Verification of Child Support form for the \$200 per month child support payments that cannot be verified. The two amounts are added together ($\$200 + \$400 = \$600$) and added to the family's total monthly income.

EXAMPLE 2, Redetermination: Dorris came in for redetermination for child care services for her three (3) children. She is employed and receives court ordered child support for all of her children. Her child support payment amounts vary. Per online verification, she received a total of \$2,460 for child

support during her current eligibility period. The amount of child support income added to Dorris' total monthly income is \$205.00 (\$2,460/12).

EXAMPLE 3, A New Child Support Order: Kim came in to complete an initial application for child care. She provided her gross wages for employment and reported that she started receiving child support payments three (3) months ago. The court ordered amount of child support per month is \$280.00. She stated that the absent parent paid her back child support during the first month. Per online verification, she received \$160 and a lump sum of \$2,180 the first month. The second month, she received \$214.10 and \$160 and \$250 within the past 30 days. The child support income received during the two (2) previous months cannot be counted. Only the \$250 received within the past 30 days can be counted as child support income and added to the family's total monthly income.

EXAMPLE 4, Sporadic Child Support Payments: Andy came in for redetermination. He has received child support payments sporadically for 15 months as verified in Online Verification. When the absent parent was not working, he did not receive any payments. The child care worker considers the payments received during his current eligibility period. He received seven (7) payments which totaled \$2,650. This amount is divided by 12 ($\$2,650/12=\220.83) to determine the amount to be added to his monthly income.

EXAMPLE 5, Parent No Longer Receiving Child Support: Mary came in for redetermination in October. She stated that she is still employed and received child support regularly until May. She also stated that the reason that she is no longer receiving child support is because the absent parent lost his job and has been unable to pay. The child care worker looks at the past 30 days of child support to verify Mary's statement. She found that Mary had not received any payments. Therefore, child support income will not be included in the family's countable income. Mary must notify her child care worker if the payments resume. The worker will then consider the child support payments during the current eligibility period to determine the amount to add to her monthly income.

VIII. CALCULATING EARNED INCOME

The majority of clients receiving child care services do so to support their employment. The calculation of income earned must be clear and can be explained by one of the following: an explanation in the case narrative; handwritten notes on the application, a calculator tape attached to the application or another document in the file. Any unusual circumstances that the child care worker considers in calculating income must be documented in detail in the case narrative.