

# Arrearages: What are they?

A GUIDE TO ADDRESSING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



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If you need additional information about your case or services available, contact your CSEA support specialist.

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175 S. Main Street  
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**Walk In / Hearing / Appt.**

8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
(Monday – Friday)

**Genetic Testing Walk In**

8:30 am – 3:00 pm  
Monday - Thursday

**Payment Hours**

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<https://co.summitoh.net/prosecutor/index.php/divisions/child-support-enforcement>

To obtain a listing of Ohio County Child Support Agencies and phone numbers, please visit:  
<http://www.jfs.ohio.gov/county/cntydir.stm>

To view a listing of all States Child Support Agencies and phone numbers, please visit:  
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/css/resource/state-and-tribal-child-support-agency-contacts>

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## What is a child support arrearage?

An arrearage is delinquent or past due monies owed for support. It is calculated at the end of the month by comparing the amount of child support that was owed during the month with the amount paid for the month. Any excess payments are applied against previously accumulated arrears or applied to the future. Any shortage is added to previously accumulated arrears.

Sometimes, arrearages are accumulated due to a retroactive date in an order. Most times, arrears are accumulated by a failure to pay. If the arrearage is equal or greater than one month of support obligation, the case is delinquent and many enforcement remedies may be utilized upon issuance of a default notice to the Obligor.

## What is the current collection activity for the State of Ohio?

As reported by the Federal Office of Child Support for Federal Fiscal Year 2018:

- Distributed collections in Ohio total \$1,596,227,531.
- Total amount of arrearages due in Ohio exceeds \$5 billion.
- Total cases in Ohio with support orders is 739,068.

## Why is analysis of arrearages important to consider?

The statistics point to the importance of the economy and other socioeconomic factors that influence the child support program. The importance of enforcement strategies that include employment assistance is implied. The statistics also suggest the importance of setting child support orders at reasonable amounts, especially when income is being imputed.

In addition, the statistics suggest the need for arrears forgiveness programs for arrearages owed to the government when an obligor is making current support payments or when other conditions are met. Summit County CSEA has a program entitled Reduction of Permanently Assigned Arrears to assist in waiving or compromising child support owed to the State of Ohio.

Traditional and punitive measures of enforcement will always be important, but such measures must be accompanied by good policy, customer service, and public education efforts.

The Summit County CSEA supports continued analysis of arrearages in Ohio's child support cases. The analysis is necessary to gain insight into the composition of the child support debt, develop strategies to collect child support from those able to pay, and to continue to make use of the tools available for enforcement. It is also important for state policies and practices to help prevent the accumulation of large amounts of debt and assist with measures to get the debt paid.

