



**RULE-MAKING ORDER  
EMERGENCY RULE ONLY**

**CR-103E (December 2017)  
(Implements RCW 34.05.350  
and 34.05.360)**

CODE REVISER USE ONLY

OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER  
STATE OF WASHINGTON  
FILED

DATE: October 14, 2021

TIME: 8:25 AM

WSR 21-21-046

**Agency:** Department of Social and Health Services, Economic Services Administration

**Effective date of rule:**

**Emergency Rules**

- Immediately upon filing.
- Later (specify) October 16, 2021

**Any other findings required by other provisions of law as precondition to adoption or effectiveness of rule?**

- Yes  No If Yes, explain:

**Purpose:** The DSHS Division of Child Support (DCS) files this CR-103E, *Rule-Making Order*, to extend emergency rules amending chapter 388-14A in order to implement Substitute House Bill 2302 ([SHB 2302](#), Chapter 227, Laws of 2020) regarding abatement of child support obligations for certain incarcerated individuals as well as other administrative provisions regarding service and mailing of modification requests and hearing notices. Relevant provisions of SHB 2302 took effect February 1, 2021.

**Citation of rules affected by this order:**

New: WAC 388-14A-3935; WAC 388-14A-3940; WAC 388-14A-3945; WAC 388-14A-3950; WAC 388-14A-3955; WAC 388-14A-3960; WAC 388-14A-3965; WAC 388-14A-3970; WAC 388-14A-3975;

Repealed:

Amended: WAC 388-14A-1020; WAC 388-14A-3800; WAC 388-14A-3900; WAC 388-14A-3901; WAC 388-14A-3903; WAC 388-14A-3925; WAC 388-14A-6100

Suspended:

**Statutory authority for adoption:** Emergency rulemaking is authorized under RCW 34.05.350(1)(a) and (b) in order to implement Substitute House Bill 2302 ([SHB 2302](#), Chapter 227, Laws of 2020) regarding incarceration abatement and administrative provisions regarding service and mailing of modification requests and hearing notices, which took effect on February 1, 2021. Further authority is found in RCW 26.09.105, 26.18.170, 26.19.011, 26.19.071, 26.23.050, 26.23.110, 34.05.020, 34.05.060, 34.05.220, 74.08.090, 74.20A.055, 74.20A.056.

**Other authority:**

**EMERGENCY RULE**

Under RCW 34.05.350 the agency for good cause finds:

- That immediate adoption, amendment, or repeal of a rule is necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety, or general welfare, and that observing the time requirements of notice and opportunity to comment upon adoption of a permanent rule would be contrary to the public interest.
- That state or federal law or federal rule or a federal deadline for state receipt of federal funds requires immediate adoption of a rule.

**Reasons for this finding:** The Legislature enacted SHB 2302 during the 2020 Legislative Session. Several provisions required to implement incarceration abatement and service/ mailing procedures for modification requests and hearing notices have a February 1, 2021 effective date. These provisions direct DCS to abate child support payments for certain incarcerated individuals and also direct the Office of Administrative Hearings to send certain mailings and notices instead of DCS. Emergency rulemaking is necessary to continue these statutory changes. DCS has filed its intent to adopt the rule as permanent under WSR 21-13-094 and is actively taking steps towards its adoption.

**Note: If any category is left blank, it will be calculated as zero.  
No descriptive text.**

**Count by whole WAC sections only, from the WAC number through the history note.  
A section may be counted in more than one category.**

**The number of sections adopted in order to comply with:**

Federal statute:	New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
Federal rules or standards:	New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
Recently enacted state statutes:	New	<u>9</u>	Amended	<u>7</u>	Repealed	___

**The number of sections adopted at the request of a nongovernmental entity:**

New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
-----	-----	---------	-----	----------	-----

**The number of sections adopted on the agency's own initiative:**

New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
-----	-----	---------	-----	----------	-----

**The number of sections adopted in order to clarify, streamline, or reform agency procedures:**

New	9	Amended	<u>7</u>	Repealed	___
-----	---	---------	----------	----------	-----

**The number of sections adopted using:**

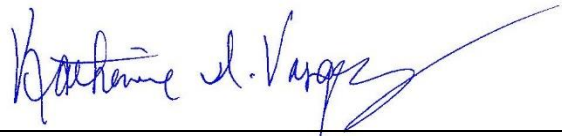
Negotiated rule making:	New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
Pilot rule making:	New	___	Amended	___	Repealed	___
Other alternative rule making:	New	9	Amended	<u>7</u>	Repealed	___

**Date Adopted:** October 14, 2021

**Name:** Katherine I. Vasquez

**Title:** Rule Coordinator

**Signature:**



**WAC 388-14A-1020 What definitions apply to the rules regarding child support enforcement?** For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

**"Abatement"** means the temporary reduction of child support obligations of an incarcerated person who is required to pay support.

**"Absence of a court order"** means that there is no court order either setting a support obligation for the noncustodial parent (NCP), or specifically relieving the NCP of a support obligation, for a particular child.

**"Absent parent"** is a term used for a noncustodial parent.

**"Accessible coverage"** means health care coverage which provides primary care services to the children with reasonable effort by the custodial parent.

**"Accrued debt"** means past-due child support which has not been paid.

**"Acknowledged father"** means a man who has established a father-child relationship by:

(1) Signing a valid acknowledgment of paternity under RCW 26.26.300 through 26.26.375 prior to January 1, 2019;

(2) Signing a valid acknowledgment of parentage under RCW 26.26A.200 through 26.26A.265 on or after January 1, 2019; or

(3) Signing a valid acknowledgment of paternity or parentage under another jurisdiction's laws.

**"Acknowledged parent"** means an individual who, after January 1, 2019, has established a parent-child relationship by signing a valid acknowledgment of parentage under RCW 26.26A.200 through 26.26A.265.

**"Adjudicated parent"** means a person who has been adjudicated by a court of competent jurisdiction to be the parent of a child.

**"Administrative order"** means a determination, finding, decree or order for support issued under RCW 74.20A.055, 74.20A.056, or 74.20A.059 or by the agency of an Indian tribe or another state or country's agency under an administrative process, establishing the existence of a support obligation (including medical support) and ordering the payment of a set or determinable amount of money for current support and/or a support debt. Administrative orders include:

(1) An order entered under chapter 34.05 RCW;

(2) An agreed settlement or consent order entered under WAC 388-14A-3600; and

(3) A support establishment notice which has become final by operation of law.

**"Agency"** means the Title IV-D provider of a state or tribe, or the central authority of another country. For the state of Washington, the Title IV-D provider is the division of child support (DCS) within the department of social and health services (DSHS).

**"Agreed settlement"** is an administrative order that reflects the agreement of the noncustodial parent, the custodial parent and the division of child support. An agreed settlement does not require the approval of an administrative law judge.

**"Aid" or "public assistance"** means cash assistance under the temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) program, the aid to families with dependent children (AFDC) program, federally funded or state-funded foster care, and includes day care benefits and medical benefits provided to families as an alternative or supplement to TANF.

**"Alternate recipient"** means a child of the employee or retiree named within a support order as being entitled to coverage under an employer's group health plan.

**"Annual fee"** means the fee charged on never-assistance cases based on the amount of collections between October 1 and September 30 each year, required by the Federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 and RCW 74.20.040.

**"Applicant/custodian"** means a person who applies for nonassistance support enforcement services on behalf of a child or children residing in their household.

**"Applicant/recipient," "applicant,"** and **"recipient"** means a person who receives public assistance on behalf of a child or children residing in their household.

**"Arrears"** means the debt amount owed for a period of time before the current month.

**"Assistance"** means cash assistance under the state program funded under Title IV-A of the federal Social Security Act.

**"Assistance unit"** means a cash assistance unit as defined in WAC 388-408-0005. An assistance unit is the group of people who live together and whose income or resources the department counts to decide eligibility for benefits and the amount of benefits.

**"Birth costs"** means medical expenses incurred by the custodial parent or the state, tribe, or country for the birth of a child.

**"Cash medical support"** means a combination of:

(1) A parent's monthly payment toward the premium paid for coverage provided by a public entity or by another parent, which represents the obligated parent's proportionate share of the premium paid, but this amount is limited to no more than twenty-five percent of the obligated parent's basic support obligation; and

(2) A parent's proportionate share of uninsured medical expenses.

**"Central authority"** means the agency designated by a government to facilitate support enforcement with a foreign reciprocating country (FRC) pursuant to section 459A of the federal Social Security Act.

**"Child,"** for the purposes of this chapter, means:

(a) An individual for whom a child support obligation is being established or enforced; or

(b) A dependent child as defined in RCW 74.20A.020(3); and

(c) Unless the context or the facts of a particular case clearly requires otherwise, "child" may be used interchangeably with the term "children."

**"Children,"** for the purpose of this chapter, means more than one child, unless the context or the facts of a particular case clearly requires the term to refer to only one child.

**"Conditionally assigned arrears"** means those temporarily assigned arrears remaining on a case after the period of public assistance ends.

**"Conference board"** means a method used by the division of child support for resolving complaints regarding DCS cases and for granting exceptional or extraordinary relief from debt.

**"Consent order"** means a support order that reflects the agreement of the noncustodial parent, the custodial parent and the division of child support. A consent order requires the approval of an administrative law judge.

**"Controlling order"** means the only order issued or, where multiple orders exist, the order determined by a tribunal to control prospective current support pursuant to the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA), chapter 26.21A RCW.

**"Controlling order state"** means the state in which the only order was issued or, where multiple orders exist, the state in which the order determined by a tribunal to control prospective current support pursuant to the UIFSA was issued.

**"Country"** means a foreign country (or a political subdivision thereof) declared to be a Foreign Reciprocating Country (FRC) under 42 U.S.C. 659A and any foreign country (or political subdivision thereof) with which the state has entered into a reciprocal arrangement for the establishment and enforcement of support obligations to the extent consistent with federal law pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 659A.

**"Court order"** means a judgment, decree or order of a Washington state superior court, or a court of comparable jurisdiction of an Indian tribe or another state or country.

**"Current support"** or **"current and future support"** means the amount of child support which is owed for each month.

**"Custodial parent or CP"** means the person, whether a parent or not, with whom a dependent child resides the majority of the time period for which the division of child support seeks to establish or enforce a support obligation.

**"Date the state assumes responsibility for the support of a dependent child on whose behalf support is sought"** means the date that the TANF or AFDC program grant is effective. For purposes of this chapter, the state remains responsible for the support of a dependent child until public assistance terminates, or support enforcement services end, whichever occurs later.

**"Delinquency"** means failure to pay current child support when due.

**"Department"** means the Washington state department of social and health services (DSHS).

**"Dependent child"** means a person:

- (1) Seventeen years of age or younger who is not self-supporting, married, or a member of the United States armed forces;
- (2) Eighteen years of age or older for whom a court order requires support payments past age eighteen;
- (3) Eighteen years of age or older, but under nineteen years of age, for whom an administrative support order exists if the child is participating full-time in a secondary school program or the same level of vocational or technical training.

**"Determination of parentage"** means the establishment of the parent-child relationship by:

- (1) A judicial proceeding;
- (2) The signing of a valid acknowledgment of paternity under:
  - (a) RCW 26.26.300 through 26.26.375 prior to January 1, 2019; or
  - (b) Another jurisdiction's laws dealing with the acknowledgment or affidavit of paternity or the acknowledgment of parentage; or
- (3) The signing of a valid acknowledgment of parentage under RCW 26.26A.200 through 26.26A.265 on or after January 1, 2019.

**"Differentiated support amount"** means an amount of child support that represents a parent's support obligation for more than one child and may justifiably be divided into "per child" amounts for each child covered by the support order, based on information contained in the support order.

**"Differentiated support order"** means a child support order which provides a monthly amount of child support for two or more children, and either provides a specific support obligation for each child or provides enough information in the order so that the monthly amount

may justifiably be divided into a "per child" amount for each child covered by the support order.

**"Disbursement"** means the amount of child support distributed to a case that is paid to the family, state, other child support enforcement agency in another state or foreign country, Indian tribe, or person or entity making the payment.

**"Disposable earnings"** means the amount of earnings remaining after the deduction of amounts required by law to be withheld.

**"Distribution"** means how a collection is allocated or split within a case or among multiple cases.

**"Domestic partner"** means a state registered domestic partner as defined in chapter 26.60 RCW.

**"Earnings"** means compensation paid or payable for personal service. Earnings include:

- (1) Wages or salary;
- (2) Commissions and bonuses;
- (3) Periodic payments under pension plans, retirement programs, and insurance policies of any type;
- (4) Disability payments under Title 51 RCW;
- (5) Unemployment compensation under RCW 50.40.020, 50.40.050 and Title 74 RCW;
- (6) Benefits under the family and medical leave insurance program under Title 50A RCW;
- (7) Gains from capital, labor, or a combination of the two; and
- (8) The fair value of nonmonetary compensation received in exchange for personal services.

**"Employee"** means a person to whom an employer is paying, owes, or anticipates paying earnings in exchange for services performed for the employer.

**"Employer"** means any person or organization having an employment relationship with any person. This includes:

- (1) Partnerships and associations;
- (2) Trusts and estates;
- (3) Joint stock companies and insurance companies;
- (4) Domestic and foreign corporations;
- (5) The receiver or trustee in bankruptcy; and
- (6) The trustee or legal representative of a deceased person.

**"Employment"** means personal services of whatever nature, including service in interstate commerce, performed for earnings or under any contract for personal services. Such a contract may be written or oral, express or implied.

**"Family"** means the person or persons on whose behalf support is sought, which may include a custodial parent and one or more children, or one or more children in foster care placement. The family is sometimes called the assistance unit.

**"Family arrears"** means the amount of past-due support owed to the family, which has not been conditionally, temporarily or permanently assigned to a state. Also called "nonassistance arrears."

**"Family member"** means the caretaker relative, the child or children, and any other person whose needs are considered in determining eligibility for assistance.

**"Foreign order"** means a court or administrative order entered by a tribunal other than one in the state of Washington, including an order entered by a tribunal in an Indian tribe or another state or country.

**"Foreign reciprocating country"** or FRC means a country which the federal government has declared to be a foreign reciprocating country,

which means that the foreign country has established, or undertakes to establish, procedures for the establishment and enforcement of duties of support owed to custodial parents who are residents of the United States, and that such procedures are substantially in conformity with the standards prescribed under title IV-D of the federal Social Security Act.

**"Foster care case"** means a case referred to the Title IV-D agency by the Title IV-E agency, which is the department of children, youth, and families (DCYF).

**"Fraud,"** for the purposes of vacating an agreed settlement or consent order, means:

- (1) The representation of the existence or the nonexistence of a fact;
- (2) The representation's materiality;
- (3) The representation's falsity;
- (4) The speaker's knowledge that the representation is false;
- (5) The speaker's intent that the representation should be acted on by the person to whom it is made;
- (6) Ignorance of the falsity on the part of the person to whom it is made;
- (7) The latter's:
  - (a) Reliance on the truth of the representation;
  - (b) Right to rely on it; and
  - (c) Subsequent damage.

**"Full support enforcement services"** means the entire range of services available in a Title IV-D case.

**"Good cause"** for the purposes of late hearing requests and petitions to vacate orders on default means a substantial reason or legal justification for delay, including but not limited to the grounds listed in civil rule 60. The time periods used in civil rule 60 apply to good cause determinations in this chapter.

**"Head of household"** means the parent or parents with whom the dependent child or children were residing at the time of placement in foster care.

**"Health care costs"** means medical expenses. Certain statutes in chapter 26.19 RCW refer to medical expenses as health care costs.

**"Health care coverage"** means fee for service, health maintenance organization, preferred provider organization, and other types of private health insurance and public health care coverage under which medical services could be provided to a dependent child or children. These services include, but are not limited to: Medical/surgical (inpatient, outpatient, physician) care, medical equipment (crutches, wheel chairs, prosthesis, etc.), pharmacy products, optometric care, dental care, orthodontic care, preventive care, mental health care, and physical therapy. The term "health care coverage" includes, but is not limited to, health insurance coverage.

**"Health insurance"** or **"health insurance coverage"** is included in the definition of "health care coverage." Health insurance coverage includes any coverage under which medical services are provided by an employer or a union whether that coverage is provided through a self-insurance program, under the employee retirement income security act of 1974, a commercial insurer pursuant to chapters 48.20 and 48.21 RCW, a health care service contractor pursuant to chapter 48.44 RCW, or a health maintenance organization pursuant to chapter 48.46 RCW, and the state through chapter 41.05 RCW.

**"Hearing"** means an adjudicative proceeding authorized by this chapter, or chapters 26.23, 74.20 and 74.20A RCW, conducted under chapter 388-02 WAC and chapter 34.05 RCW.

**"I/me"** means the person asking the question which appears as the title of a rule.

**"Income"** includes:

- (1) All gains in real or personal property;
- (2) Net proceeds from the sale or exchange of real or personal property;
- (3) Earnings;
- (4) Interest and dividends;
- (5) Proceeds of insurance policies;
- (6) Other periodic entitlement to money from any source; and
- (7) Any other property subject to withholding for support under the laws of this state.

**"Income withholding action"** includes all withholding actions which DCS is authorized to take, and includes but is not limited to the following actions:

- (1) Asserting liens under RCW 74.20A.060;
- (2) Serving and enforcing liens under chapter 74.20A RCW;
- (3) Issuing orders to withhold and deliver under chapter 74.20A RCW;
- (4) Issuing notices of payroll deduction under chapter 26.23 RCW; and
- (5) Obtaining wage assignment orders under RCW 26.18.080.

**"Initiating agency"** or **"initiating jurisdiction"** means a state or Tribal IV-D agency or the central authority of another country, as defined in this rule, in which an individual has applied for or is receiving services.

**"Intergovernmental IV-D case"** means a IV-D case in which the non-custodial parent lives and/or works in a different jurisdiction than the custodial parent and children that has been referred by an initiating agency to a responding agency for services. An intergovernmental IV-D case may include any combination of referrals between states, tribes, and countries. An intergovernmental IV-D case also may include cases in which a state agency is seeking only to collect support arrearages, whether owed to the family or assigned to the state.

**"Locate"** can mean efforts to obtain service of a support establishment notice in the manner prescribed by WAC 388-14A-3105.

**"Medical assistance"** means medical benefits under Title XIX of the federal Social Security Act provided to families as an alternative or supplement to TANF. This term includes public health care coverage, which is called apple health in Washington state.

**"Medical expenses,"** for the purpose of establishing support obligations under RCW 26.09.105, 74.20A.055 and 74.20A.056, or for the purpose of enforcement action under chapters 26.18, 26.23, 74.20 and 74.20A RCW, including the notice of support debt and the notice of support owed, means medical costs incurred on behalf of a child, which include:

- Medical services related to an individual's general health and well-being, including but not limited to, medical/surgical care, preventive care, mental health care and physical therapy; and
- Prescribed medical equipment and prescribed pharmacy products;
- Health care coverage, such as coverage under a health insurance plan, including the cost of premiums for coverage of a child;
- Dental, orthodontic, and optometrical costs incurred on behalf of a child; and



• Copayments and/or deductibles incurred on behalf of a child.  
Medical expenses are sometimes also called health care costs or medical costs.

**"Medical support"** consists of:

(1) Health care coverage, which may be health insurance coverage or public health care coverage; and

(2) Cash medical support, which consists of:

(a) A parent's monthly payment toward the premium paid for coverage provided by a public entity or by another parent, which represents the obligated parent's proportionate share of the premium paid, but no more than twenty-five percent of the obligated parent's basic support obligation; and

(b) A parent's proportionate share of uninsured medical expenses.

**"Monthly payment toward the premium"** means a parent's contribution toward premiums paid for coverage provided by a public entity or by another parent, which is based on the obligated parent's proportionate share of the premium paid, but is limited to no more than twenty-five percent of the obligated parent's basic support obligation.

**"National Medical Support Notice"** or **"NMSN"** is a federally mandated form that DCS uses to enforce a health insurance support obligation; the NMSN is a notice of enrollment as described in RCW 26.18.170.

**"Noncustodial parent or NCP"** means the natural or biological parent, adoptive parent, adjudicated parent, presumed parent, responsible stepparent or person who signed and filed an affidavit acknowledging paternity or parentage, from whom the state seeks support for a dependent child. A parent is considered to be an NCP when for the majority of the time during the period for which support is sought, the dependent child resided somewhere other than with that parent.

**"Nonmedical expenses"** means amounts incurred on behalf of a child which are not medical expenses as defined in this chapter. Nonmedical expenses include, but are not limited to, day care or other special childrearing expenses such as tuition and long-distance transportation costs to and from the parents for visitation purposes.

**"Obligated parent"** means a parent who is required under a child support order to provide medical support, which could include health care coverage or to reimburse the other parent for his or her share of uninsured medical expenses for a dependent child. The obligated parent could be either the NCP or the CP.

**"Other ordinary expense"** means an expense incurred by a parent which:

(1) Directly benefits the dependent child; and

(2) Relates to the parent's residential time or visitation with the child.

**"Parent"** means an individual who has established a parent-child relationship under:

(1) RCW 26.26.101 prior to January 1, 2019;

(2) RCW 26.26A.100 on or after January 1, 2019; or

(3) Under the laws of another jurisdiction.

**"Parent-child relationship"** means the legal relationship between a child and a parent of the child. The term includes the mother-child relationship and the father-child relationship.

**"Participant"** means an employee or retiree who is eligible for coverage under an employer group health plan.

**"Pass-through"** means the portion of a support collection distributed to assigned support that the state pays to a family currently receiving TANF.

**"Past support"** means support arrears.

**"Paternity testing"** means blood testing or genetic tests of blood, tissue or bodily fluids. This is also called genetic testing.

**"Payment services only"** or **"PSO"** means a case on which the division of child support's activities are limited to recording and distributing child support payments, and maintaining case records. A PSO case is not a IV-D case.

**"Permanently assigned arrears"** means those arrears which the state may collect and retain up to the amount of unreimbursed assistance.

**"Physical custodian"** means custodial parent (CP).

**"Plan administrator"** means the person or entity which performs those duties specified under 29 U.S.C. 1002 (16) (A) for a health plan. If no plan administrator is specifically so designated by the plan's organizational documents, the plan's sponsor is the administrator of the plan. Sometimes an employer acts as its own plan administrator.

**"Premium"** means the amount paid for coverage provided by a public entity or by another parent for a child covered by a child support order. This term may also mean "cost of coverage."

**"Presumed parent"** means a person who, by operation of law under RCW 26.26.116, is recognized as the parent of a child until that status is rebutted or confirmed in a judicial proceeding.

**"Private insurance"** is a term used in this chapter to refer to accessible health insurance for a child provided by a parent without the need for service of a national medical support notice, and does not include public health care coverage provided by the state.

**"Proportionate share"** or **"proportional share"** means an amount equal to a parent's percentage share of the combined monthly net income of both parents as computed on the worksheets when determining a parent's child support obligation under chapter 26.19 RCW.

**"Public health care coverage,"** sometimes called "state purchased health care," means state-financed or federally financed medical coverage, whether or not there is an assignment of rights. For children residing in Washington state, public health care coverage is called apple health; this includes coverage through the department of social and health services or the health care authority, except for coverage under chapter 41.05 RCW. For children residing outside of Washington, this includes coverage through another state's agencies that administer state purchased health care programs.

**"Putative father"** includes all men who may possibly be the father of the child or children on whose behalf the application for assistance or support enforcement services is made.

**"Reasonable efforts to locate"** means any of the following actions performed by the division of child support:

(1) Mailing a support establishment notice to the noncustodial parent in the manner described in WAC 388-14A-3105;

(2) Referral to a sheriff or other server of process, or to a locate service or department employee for locate activities;

(3) Tracing activity such as:

(a) Checking local telephone directories and attempts by telephone or mail to contact the custodial parent, relatives of the non-custodial parent, past or present employers, or the post office;

(b) Contacting state agencies, unions, financial institutions or fraternal organizations;

(c) Searching periodically for identification information recorded by other state agencies, federal agencies, credit bureaus, or other record-keeping agencies or entities; or

(d) Maintaining a case in the division of child support's automated locate program, which is a continuous search process.

(4) Referral to the state or federal parent locator service;

(5) Referral to the attorney general, prosecuting attorney, the IV-D agency of another state, or the Department of the Treasury for specific legal or collection action;

(6) Attempting to confirm the existence of and to obtain a copy of a paternity acknowledgment; or

(7) Conducting other actions reasonably calculated to produce information regarding the NCP's whereabouts.

**"Required support obligation for the current month"** means the amount set by a superior court order, tribal court order, or administrative order for support which is due in the month in question.

**"Resident"** means a person physically present in the state of Washington who intends to make their home in this state. A temporary absence from the state does not destroy residency once it is established.

**"Residential care"** means foster care, either state or federally funded.

**"Residential parent"** means the custodial parent (CP), or the person with whom the child resides that majority of the time.

**"Responding agency"** or **"responding jurisdiction"** means the agency that is providing services in response to a referral from an initiating agency in an intergovernmental IV-D case.

**"Responsible parent"** is a term sometimes used for a noncustodial parent.

**"Responsible stepparent"** means a stepparent who has established an in loco parentis relationship with the dependent child.

**"Retained support,"** depending on the context in which it is used, can mean one of the following:

(1) An amount paid directly to the custodial parent by the non-custodial parent during a time when there is an open TANF grant, which the custodial parent does not immediately report or turn over to the department;

(2) A debt owed to the division of child support by anyone other than a noncustodial parent; or

(3) Amounts collected and retained by the division of child support which are applied to current or past due child support obligations which have been assigned to the state.

**"Satisfaction of judgment"** means payment in full of a court-ordered support obligation, or a determination that such an obligation is no longer enforceable.

**"Secretary"** means the secretary of the department of social and health services or the secretary's designee.

**"Self-support reserve"** or **"self support reserve"** means an amount equal to one hundred twenty-five percent of the federal poverty guideline for a one-person family.

**"State"** means a state or political subdivision, territory, or possession of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, a federally recognized Indian tribe or a foreign country.

**"Superior court order"** means a judgment, decree or order of a Washington state superior court, or of a court of comparable jurisdiction in an Indian tribe or another state or country.

**"Support debt"** means support which was due under a support order but has not been paid. This includes:

- (1) Delinquent support;
- (2) A debt for the payment of expenses for the reasonable or necessary care, support and maintenance including uninsured medical expenses, birth costs, child care costs, and special child rearing expenses of a dependent child or other person;
- (3) A debt under RCW 74.20A.100 or 74.20A.270; or
- (4) Accrued interest, fees, or penalties charged on a support debt, and attorney's fees and other litigation costs awarded in an action under Title IV-D to establish or enforce a support obligation.

**"Support enforcement services"** means all actions the Title IV-D agency is required to perform under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act and state law.

**"Support establishment notice"** means a notice and finding of financial responsibility under WAC 388-14A-3115, a notice and finding of parental responsibility under WAC 388-14A-3120, or a notice and finding of medical responsibility under WAC 388-14A-3125.

**"Support money"** means money paid to satisfy a support obligation, whether it is called child support, spousal support, alimony, maintenance, reimbursement for uninsured medical expenses, health care coverage, or birth costs.

**"Support obligation"** means the obligation to provide for the necessary care, support and maintenance of a dependent child or other person as required by law, including health care coverage, uninsured medical expenses, birth costs, and child care or special child rearing expenses.

**"Support order"** means a court order, administrative order or tribal court order which contains a determination, finding, decree or order that sets a child support obligation (including medical support) and orders either the payment of a set or determinable amount of money for current support and/or a support debt, or the provision of medical support, or both. For purposes of abatement under this chapter, a support order includes the child support obligation and the obligations based on the terms of the basic child support order, such as those determined by notices of support owed.

**"Temporarily assigned arrears"** means those arrears which accrue prior to the family receiving assistance, for assistance applications dated on or after October 1, 1997, but before October 1, 2008. After the family terminates assistance, temporarily assigned arrears become conditionally assigned arrears.

**"Temporary assistance for needy families,"** or "TANF" means cash assistance under the temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) program under Title IV-A of the Social Security Act.

**"Title IV-A"** means Title IV-A of the Social Security Act established under Title XX of the Social Security amendments and as incorporated in Title 42 U.S.C.

**"Title IV-A agency"** means the part of the department of social and health services which carries out the state's responsibilities under the temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) program (and the aid for dependent children (AFDC) program when it existed).

**"Title IV-D"** means Title IV-D of the Social Security Act established under Title XX of the Social Security amendments and as incorporated in Title 42 U.S.C.

**"Title IV-D agency" or "IV-D agency"** means the agency responsible for carrying out the Title IV-D plan in a state or tribe. For the

state of Washington, this is the division of child support (DCS) within the department of social and health services (DSHS).

**"Title IV-D case"** is a case in which the division of child support provides services which qualifies for funding under the Title IV-D plan.

**"Title IV-D plan"** means the plan established under the conditions of Title IV-D and approved by the secretary, Department of Health and Human Services.

**"Title IV-E"** means Title IV-E of the Social Security Act established under Title XX of the Social Security amendments and as incorporated in Title 42 U.S.C.

**"Title IV-E case"** means a foster care case.

**"Tribal TANF"** means a temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) program run by a tribe.

**"Tribunal"** means a state court, tribal court, administrative agency, or quasi-judicial entity authorized to establish, enforce or modify support orders or to determine parentage, and includes such courts, agencies or entities in other states or countries.

**"Underlying order"** means an existing child support order for which DCS serves a notice of support owed under RCW 26.23.110 to determine a sum certain support obligation.

**"Undifferentiated support amount"** means an amount of child support that represents a parent's support obligation for more than one child which cannot justifiably be divided into "per child" amounts for each child covered by the support order.

**"Undifferentiated support order"** means a child support order which provides a monthly amount of child support for two or more children, but does not provide a specific support obligation for each child or does not contain enough information in either the order or the worksheets associated with the order to justify dividing the monthly amount into "per child" amounts for each child covered by the support order.

**"Uninsured medical expenses,"** for the purpose of establishing or enforcing support obligations, means:

(1) Medical expenses not paid by insurance for medical, dental, orthodontic, prescription, and optometrical costs incurred on behalf of a child; and

(2) Premiums, copayments, or deductibles incurred on behalf of a child.

**"Unreimbursed assistance"** means the cumulative amount of assistance which was paid to the family and which has not been reimbursed by assigned support collections.

**"Unreimbursed medical expenses"** means any amounts paid by one parent for uninsured medical expenses, which that parent claims the obligated parent owes under a child support order, which percentage share is stated in the child support order itself, not just in the worksheets.

**"Washington State Support Registry" or "WSSR"** is the entity created under RCW 26.23.030 within the division of child support (DCS) which, among other duties, contains a central unit for the collection, accounting and disbursement of support payments.

**"We"** means the division of child support, part of the department of social and health services of the state of Washington.

**"You"** means the reader of the rules, a member of the public, or a recipient of support enforcement services.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 13-01-075, filed 12/18/12, effective 1/18/13)

**WAC 388-14A-3800 Once a support order is entered, can it be changed?** (1) A support order entered by a superior court may only be modified by a superior court or a court of comparable jurisdiction of an Indian tribe or another state or country. The Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA, adopted in Washington as chapter 26.21A RCW) determines which state, tribe or country may modify the order.

(2) If the order specifically states how the amount of support may be adjusted, the division of child support (DCS) may bring an administrative action under RCW 26.23.110 and WAC 388-14A-3310.

(3) As provided in WAC 388-14A-3900, DCS may review any support order to determine whether DCS should petition to modify the support provisions of the order.

(4) Either DCS, the CP or the NCP may petition to modify an administrative order under WAC 388-14A-3925. Acting as a responding jurisdiction, DCS may petition to modify an administrative order at the request of the initiating jurisdiction.

(5) Under appropriate circumstances, an administrative support order may be vacated. See WAC 388-14A-3700.

(6) Child support orders may be changed under WAC 388-14A-3940 to include abatement language for purposes of abatement as required by this chapter.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 13-01-075, filed 12/18/12, effective 1/18/13)

**WAC 388-14A-3900 Does DCS review my support order to see if it should be modified?** (1) When the division of child support (DCS) is providing support enforcement services under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, DCS must:

(a) Review a superior court or administrative order for child support to determine whether DCS will petition to modify the child support provisions of the order; or

(b) Evaluate an intergovernmental case to determine whether to refer the case to an Indian tribe or another state or country for review of the support order for modification.

(2) Recipients of payment services only under WAC 388-14A-2000(1) are not eligible for a review of their support order under this section until they have submitted an application for support enforcement services.

(3) DCS reviews a child support order for the limited purpose of referring the order to the appropriate tribunal to add abatement language under WAC 388-14A-3940.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 13-01-075, filed 12/18/12, effective 1/18/13)

**WAC 388-14A-3901 Under what circumstances does DCS review a support order for modification?** (1) The division of child support (DCS) reviews child support orders under WAC 388-14A-3900 when DCS has enough locate information to obtain personal service on both parties to the order; and:

(a) The department is paying public assistance or has determined that the children are eligible for medical assistance, and thirty-five months have passed since:

(i) DCS last reviewed the order under this section;

(ii) The order was last modified; or

(iii) The order was entered; or

(b) A party to the order, the IV-D agency of a tribe or another state, or the central authority of another country, submits a request for review to DCS and thirty-five months have passed since:

(i) DCS or another state or tribe's IV-D agency last reviewed the order under this section;

(ii) The order was last modified; or

(iii) The order was entered.

(2) DCS may refer a request for review to another state or tribe's IV-D agency for action.

(3) DCS reviews a child support order for the limited purpose of referring the order to the appropriate tribunal to add abatement language under WAC 388-14A-3940. A review under this subsection does not impact reviews conducted under subsections (1) or (2) of this section.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 20-04-032, filed 1/28/20, effective 2/28/20)

**WAC 388-14A-3903 How does DCS decide whether to petition for modification of a support order?** (1) The division of child support (DCS) petitions to modify a support order when DCS finds during the review that each of the following conditions are present:

(a) The proposed change in child support based on the Washington state child support schedule:

(i) Is at least fifteen percent above or below the current support obligation;

(ii) Is at least one hundred dollars per month above or below the current support obligation; and

(iii) Is at least a two thousand four hundred dollar change over the remaining life of the support order; or

(iv) Will provide enough income to:

(A) Make the family ineligible for public assistance if the non-custodial parent (NCP) pays the full amount due under the proposed order; or

(B) Allow a family, otherwise eligible for public assistance, to remain off of assistance.

(b) The case meets the legal requirements for modification under RCW 26.09.170, 74.20A.059, or WAC 388-14A-3925.

(2) DCS may petition to modify the order without regard to subsection (1)(a)(i) of this section if the reason DCS reviewed the order is the noncustodial parent's incarceration.

(3) DCS may petition to modify the order without regard to subsection (1)(a) of this section when:

(a) The order does not require the NCP to provide health insurance coverage for the children; and

(b) Health insurance coverage is available through the NCP's employer or union at a reasonable cost; or

(c) Both parties agree to an order modifying the support amount; or

(d) DCS learns that an NCP is incarcerated and qualifies for abatement under this chapter and the child support order does not include abatement language.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 19-02-017, filed 12/21/18, effective 1/21/19)

**WAC 388-14A-3925 Who can ask to modify an administrative support order?**

(1) The division of child support (DCS), the custodial parent (CP) or the noncustodial parent (NCP) may file a petition and request a hearing to prospectively modify an administrative order for child support. The request must be in writing and must state:

(a) Any circumstances that have changed;

(b) Any relief requested; and

(c) The proposed new support amount.

(2) The petitioning party must file the request for modification with DCS.

(3) Acting as a responding jurisdiction, DCS may file a petition to prospectively modify an administrative order for child support on behalf of an initiating jurisdiction in an intergovernmental case.

(4) ~~((DCS))~~ Office of Administrative Hearings serves a copy of the request for modification and notice of hearing on all other parties by ~~((first-class))~~ regular mail at their last known address ~~((last known to DCS))~~.

(5) DCS ~~((r))~~ or the administrative law judge (ALJ) ~~((r, or the department review judge))~~:

(a) Prospectively modifies orders according to the terms of chapter 26.19 RCW and RCW 74.20A.059; and

(b) May only modify an order issued by a tribunal in another state according to the terms of RCW 26.21A.550.

(6) A request to add a requirement for the custodial parent (CP) to provide health care coverage, or to add a provision in the order to include the CP's share of uninsured medical expenses, is not by itself a sufficient basis for modification of the order.

(7) If the nonpetitioning party fails to appear at the hearing, the ALJ issues a default order based on the Washington state child support schedule and the worksheets submitted by the parties, considering the terms set out in the request for modification.

(8) If the petitioning party fails to appear at the hearing, the ALJ enters an order dismissing the petition for modification.

(9) If the petition for modification does not comply with the requirements of subsection (1)(a) and (b) of this section, the ALJ may:

(a) Dismiss the petition; or



(b) Continue the hearing to give the petitioning party time to amend according to WAC 388-14A-3275 or to complete the petition.

(10) The ALJ may set the effective date of modification as the date the order is issued, the date the request was made, or any time in between. If an effective date is not set in the order, the effective date is the date the modification order is entered.

(11) For purposes of abatement under this chapter, DCS, the CP, or the NCP may seek changes to a child support order to add abatement language under WAC 388-14A-3940.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 388-14A-3935 What does DCS do with respect to abatement when it learns the noncustodial parent is an incarcerated parent?** (1) If the child support order contains abatement language, the division of child support (DCS) administers the abatement under WAC 388-14A-3945.

(2) If the child support order was entered in Washington state and does not contain abatement language, DCS refers the child support order to the appropriate tribunal for the limited purpose of adding abatement language under WAC 388-14A-3940, except as provided in subsection (3) of this section.

(3) DCS may review for modification under WAC 388-14A-3901 when the child support order does not contain abatement language and the department is paying public assistance for the child or children.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 388-14A-3940 Who can ask to add abatement language to an administrative support order?** (1) The division of child support (DCS), the custodial parent (CP), or the noncustodial parent (NCP) may file a petition and request a hearing under chapter 26.09 RCW for the limited purpose of adding abatement language to an administrative order for child support.

(2) The petitioning party must submit the request to add abatement language to DCS.

(3) Acting as a responding jurisdiction, DCS may file a petition for the limited purposes of adding abatement language to an administrative order for child support on behalf of an initiating jurisdiction in an intergovernmental case.

(4) OAH serves a copy of the request to add abatement language and notice of hearing on all other parties by regular mail at their last known address.

(5) A hearing under this section:

(a) Is for the limited purpose of determining whether statutorily required abatement language under RCW 26.09.335 should be added to the administrative support order;

(b) Is separate from the administration of the abatement by DCS under WAC 388-14A-3945;

(c) Does not otherwise modify or adjust the administrative support order; and

(d) Does not impact DCS's or any party's right to request a prospective modification of the administrative support order under WAC 388-14A-3925.

(e) Does not impact when DCS reviews a support order for modification under WAC 388-14A-3901.

(6) DCS may enter into an agreed settlement or consent order with the parties under WAC 388-14A-3600 to add abatement language to an administrative support order.

(7) If the nonpetitioning party fails to appear at the hearing, the ALJ issues a default order against that party.

(8) If the petitioning party fails to appear at the hearing, the ALJ enters an order dismissing the petition.

#### NEW SECTION

**WAC 388-14A-3945 How does DCS administer abatement of an incarcerated person's child support order?** (1) The division of child support (DCS) abates a noncustodial parent's (NCP's) child support order under this chapter when it learns that the NCP is an incarcerated person and all of the following are true:

(a) The NCP is incarcerated for or begins serving a sentence of at least six months in confinement;

(b) The child support order contains abatement language; and

(c) DCS has reviewed its records and determines the NCP has no access to or possession of income or assets to pay child support while incarcerated.

(2) There is a rebuttable presumption that an incarcerated person has no access to or possession of income or assets to pay child support while incarcerated. DCS may assert it has rebutted the presumption. See WAC 388-14A-3955.

(3) When the requirements of subsection (1) of this section are met, the child support order is abated to ten dollars per month without regard to the number of children covered by that order.

(4) The first month support is abated is the date the NCP became confined or February 1, 2021, whichever is later.

(5) The abatement ends on the last day of the third full month following the NCP's release from confinement, unless an order entered in the court or administrative forum specifies a different date.

(6) DCS sends a notice of abatement to notify the custodial parent (CP) by regular mail to their last known address, with a copy to the NCP, that the abatement has been applied.

(7) If the CP disagrees with the notice of abatement, the CP may:

(a) Request a timely hearing within twenty days of the date of the notice of abatement (see WAC 388-14A-3965);

(b) Request an untimely hearing within one year of the date of the notice of abatement (see WAC 388-14A-3965); or

(c) Request in writing to terminate or reverse the abatement at any time during the period of abatement (see WAC 388-14A-3970).

(8) If the NCP disagrees with the notice of abatement, the NCP may request in writing to terminate or reverse the abatement at any time during the period of abatement (see WAC 388-14A-3960).

(9) If the abatement results in an overpayment by the NCP:

(a) Neither DCS nor the CP is required to refund any support collections or payments received by DCS prior to the date on which DCS learned of the incarceration; and

(b) The NCP is not entitled to a refund of any support collections or payments received by DCS prior to the date on which DCS learned of the incarceration.

(10) Abatement of a child support obligation of an incarcerated person does not constitute modification or adjustment of the order.

#### NEW SECTION

**WAC 388-14A-3950 What does DCS do to reinstate the support order when the NCP is released from confinement?** (1) Unless otherwise specified in a court or administrative order, the support order is automatically reinstated as follows:

(a) Effective the first day of the fourth full month after the NCP is released from confinement, support is reinstated at fifty percent of the support amount provided in the underlying order, but not less than the presumed minimum obligation of \$50 per month per child; and

(b) Effective one year after release from confinement, support is reinstated at one hundred percent of the support amount provided in the underlying order.

(2) DCS informs the parties in writing at their last known address when reinstating support at fifty percent and one hundred percent.

(3) If the support order is modified under RCW 26.09.170 or RCW 74.20A.059 during the period of abatement, this provision regarding reinstatement of support at fifty percent in subsection (1) of this section does not apply. DCS enforces the modified support obligation.

#### NEW SECTION

**WAC 388-14A-3955 What does DCS do when it determines an incarcerated person's support order should not be abated?** (1) If DCS reviews its records and determines the NCP has access to or possession of income or assets to pay child support while incarcerated, DCS sends a notice regarding non-abatement of child support, sometimes called the notice regarding non-abatement, to the NCP and a copy to the custodial parent (CP).

(a) There is a rebuttable presumption that an incarcerated person has no access to or possession of income or assets available to pay child support while incarcerated.

(b) The notice regarding non-abatement includes the reason or reasons DCS believes it has rebutted the presumption that the NCP is unable to pay their child support obligation while incarcerated.

(2) The parties may request an adjudicative proceeding if they disagree with the notice regarding non-abatement.

(a) The parties may request a timely hearing within twenty days of the date of the notice regarding non-abatement.

(b) The parties may request an untimely hearing within one year of the date of the notice regarding non-abatement.

(c) The parties may request a late hearing one year or more after the after the date of the notice regarding non-abatement but must demonstrate good cause.

(3) For purposes of this chapter, correctional industries compensation does not count as income or assets to pay child support.

#### NEW SECTION

**WAC 388-14A-3960 What happens at a hearing on a notice regarding non-abatement of child support?** (1) The noncustodial parent (NCP) or custodial parent (CP) may request a hearing on a notice regarding non-abatement of child support, sometimes called the notice regarding non-abatement.

(2) The purpose of the hearing is for the administrative law judge (ALJ) to determine whether DCS's notice is upheld or dismissed.

(3) The ALJ must allow DCS to orally amend the notice regarding non-abatement at the hearing to conform to the evidence. The ALJ may grant a continuance, if necessary, to allow the parties additional time to present evidence or argument in response to the amendment.

(4) The administrative law judge issues an order:

(a) Upholding DCS's determination that support should not be abated because the NCP has access to or possession of income or assets to pay child support while incarcerated; or

(b) Dismissing the notice regarding non-abatement because the NCP does not have access to or possession of income or assets to pay child support while incarcerated.

(5) If the order says child support should be abated, DCS abates and sends a notice of abatement to the parties. See WAC 388-14A-3940.

#### NEW SECTION

**WAC 388-14A-3965 What happens at a hearing on a notice of abatement?** (1) The custodial parent (CP) has the burden of proof to demonstrate to the administrative law judge (ALJ) that the NCP has access to or possession of income or assets to pay child support while incarcerated.

(2) Any party to the hearing may show good cause why the abatement should end and support reinstate at a date other than what is specified in WAC 388-14A-3945.

(3) The ALJ must allow DCS to orally amend the notice of abatement at the hearing to conform to the evidence. The ALJ may grant a continuance, if necessary, to allow the parties additional time to present evidence or argument in response to the amendment.

(4) The administrative law judge issues an order:

(a) Upholding the notice of abatement;

(b) Upholding the notice of abatement and, upon a finding of good cause, specifying the date abatement ends; or

(c) Dismissing the notice of abatement because the objecting party met the burden of proof to show that NCP has access to or possession of income or assets to pay child support while incarcerated.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 388-14A-3970 Who may request to terminate or reverse an abatement?** (1) The division of child support (DCS), the custodial parent (CP), or the noncustodial parent (NCP) may submit a request to terminate or reverse an abatement at any time during the period of abatement. The request must be in writing.

(a) If DCS or the CP is the requesting party, they must include documents or other evidence demonstrating that the NCP has access to or possession of income or assets to pay child support while incarcerated.

(b) If the NCP is the requesting party, no supporting documents are required.

(2) The requesting party must file the request to terminate or reverse the abatement with DCS or the office of administrative hearings (OAH).

(3) Acting as a responding jurisdiction, DCS may file a request to terminate or reverse an abatement on behalf of an initiating jurisdiction in an intergovernmental case.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 388-14A-3975 What happens at a hearing to terminate or reverse an abatement?** (1) If the requesting party was required to submit supporting documents and did not do so, any other party may file a motion to dismiss. The requesting party may ask for a continuance to provide supporting documents.

(2) If the hearing is dismissed because supporting documents were not submitted, the requesting party may file a petition to vacate the dismissal.

(3) If a hearing is held, the ALJ may reverse the abatement or terminate the abatement on a specific date upon a finding that the NCP has access to or possession of assets or income to provide support while incarcerated.

(4) If the requesting party fails to appear after being sent a notice of hearing, the request must be dismissed.

(5) Depending on the type of evidence provided at the hearing, the ALJ may order that the abatement of the support order be:

(a) Reversed, meaning that the determination that support should be abated is vacated and all amounts owed under the support order are reinstated; or

(b) Terminated, meaning that the abatement of support ends as of the date specified in the order.

**WAC 388-14A-6100 The division of child support accepts oral requests for hearing or conference board.** (1) Except for the instances listed in subsections (8) and (9), the division of child support (DCS) accepts either a written or an oral request for hearing or conference board, even though other sections of this chapter or the relevant statutes may provide that objections and hearing requests should be in writing.

(2) The subject matter of the objection determines whether the matter is set as a conference board or hearing, unless there is a specific request for an administrative hearing under chapter 34.05 RCW.

(3) DCS processes oral and written requests for hearing in the same manner.

(4) An oral request for hearing is complete if it contains enough information to identify the person making the request, the DCS action, and the case or cases involved in the hearing request.

(5) The effective date of an oral request for hearing is the date that someone makes a complete oral request for hearing, to any DCS representative in person or by leaving a message on the automated voice mail system of any DCS field office.

(6) When making an oral request, you do not need to specify whether you want a hearing under chapter 34.05 RCW or a conference board under WAC 388-14A-6400.

(7) You can make an oral request for hearing or conference board on behalf of another person, if you have written authorization to act on their behalf. The effective date of an oral request for hearing or conference board made on behalf of another person is the later of the date of the complete oral request for hearing or the date that DCS receives the written authorization.

(8) There are (~~two~~) three types of hearing requests which must be in writing:

(a) A petition for prospective modification under WAC 388-14A-3925; (~~and~~)

(b) A petition for reimbursement for day care expenses under WAC 388-14A-4300; and

(c) A request to terminate or reverse an abatement under WAC 388-14A-3960.

(9) You must also make the following requests in writing:

(a) A request for a determination of controlling order under the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA), chapter 26.21A RCW, as described in WAC 388-14A-7305; and

(b) An objection to the determination of controlling order contained in a notice of support debt and registration issued by DCS under WAC 388-14A-7325. WAC 388-14A-7335 describes how to make this objection.