

## CHAPTER 518

### MARRIAGE DISSOLUTION

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#### 518.14 COSTS AND DISBURSEMENTS AND ATTORNEY FEES.

In a proceeding under this chapter, the court shall award attorney fees, costs, and disbursements in an amount necessary to enable a party to carry on or contest the proceeding, provided it finds:

(1) that the fees are necessary for the good-faith assertion of the party's rights in the proceeding and will not contribute unnecessarily to the length and expense of the proceeding;

(2) that the party from whom fees, costs, and disbursements are sought has the means to pay them; and

(3) that the party to whom fees, costs, and disbursements are awarded does not have the means to pay them.

Nothing in this section precludes the court from awarding, in its discretion, additional fees, costs, and disbursements against a party who unreasonably contributes to the length or expense of the proceeding. Fees, costs, and disbursements provided for in this section may be awarded at any point in the proceeding, including a modification proceeding under sections 518.18 and 518.64. The court may adjudge costs and disbursements against either party. The court may authorize the collection of money awarded by execution, or out of property sequestered, or in any other manner within the power of the court. An award of attorney's fees made by the court during the pendency of the proceeding or in the final judgment survives the proceeding and if not paid by the party directed to pay the same may be enforced as above provided or by a separate civil action brought in the attorney's own name. If the proceeding is dismissed or abandoned prior to determination and award of attorney's fees, the court may nevertheless award attorney's fees upon the attorney's motion. The award shall also survive the proceeding and may be enforced in the same manner as last above provided.

**History:** 1993 c 340 s 20

#### 518.156 COMMENCEMENT OF CUSTODY PROCEEDING.

Subdivision 1. In a court of this state which has jurisdiction to decide child custody matters, a child custody proceeding is commenced:

(a) by a parent

(1) by filing a petition for dissolution or legal separation; or

(2) where a decree of dissolution or legal separation has been entered or where none is sought, or when paternity has been recognized under section 257.75, by filing a petition or motion seeking custody or visitation of the child in the county where the child is permanently resident or where the child is found or where an earlier order for custody of the child has been entered; or

(b) by a person other than a parent, where a decree of dissolution or legal separation has been entered or where none is sought by filing a petition or motion seeking custody or visitation of the child in the county where the child is permanently resident or where the child is found or where an earlier order for custody of the child has been entered. A person seeking visitation pursuant to this paragraph must qualify under one of the provisions of section 257.022.

*[For text of subd 2, see M.S.1992]*

**History:** *1Sp1993 c 1 art 6 s 43*

## **518.17 CUSTODY AND SUPPORT OF CHILDREN ON JUDGMENT.**

*[For text of subds 1 to 2, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 3. Custody order.** (a) Upon adjudging the nullity of a marriage, or in a dissolution or separation proceeding, or in a child custody proceeding, the court shall make such further order as it deems just and proper concerning:

(1) the legal custody of the minor children of the parties which shall be sole or joint;

(2) their physical custody and residence; and

(3) their support. In determining custody, the court shall consider the best interests of each child and shall not prefer one parent over the other solely on the basis of the sex of the parent.

(b) The court shall grant the following rights to each of the parties, unless specific findings are made under section 518.68, subdivision 1. Each party has the right of access to, and to receive copies of, school, medical, dental, religious training, and other important records and information about the minor children. Each party has the right of access to information regarding health or dental insurance available to the minor children. Each party shall keep the other party informed as to the name and address of the school of attendance of the minor children. Each party has the right to be informed by school officials about the children's welfare, educational progress and status, and to attend school and parent-teacher conferences. The school is not required to hold a separate conference for each party. In case of an accident or serious illness of a minor child, each party shall notify the other party of the accident or illness, and the name of the health care provider and the place of treatment. Each party has the right to reasonable access and telephone contact with the minor children. The court may waive any of the rights under this section if it finds it is necessary to protect the welfare of a party or child.

*[For text of subd 6, see M.S.1992]*

**History:** *1993 c 322 s 7*

## **518.171 MEDICAL SUPPORT.**

**Subdivision 1. Order.** (a) Every child support order must expressly assign or reserve the responsibility for maintaining medical insurance for the minor children and the division of uninsured medical and dental costs. The court shall order the party with the better group dependent health and dental insurance coverage to name the minor child as beneficiary on any health and dental insurance plan that is comparable to or better than a number two qualified plan and available to the party on a group basis or through an employer or union. "Health insurance coverage" as used in this section does not include medical assistance provided under chapter 256, 256B, or 256D.

(b) If the court finds that dependent health or dental insurance is not available to the obligor or obligee on a group basis or through an employer or union, or that the group insurer is not accessible to the obligee, the court may require the obligor (1) to obtain other dependent health or dental insurance, (2) to be liable for reasonable and necessary medical or dental expenses of the child, or (3) to pay no less than \$50 per

month to be applied to the medical and dental expenses of the children or to the cost of health insurance dependent coverage.

(c) If the court finds that the available dependent health or dental insurance does not pay all the reasonable and necessary medical or dental expenses of the child, including any existing or anticipated extraordinary medical expenses, and the court finds that the obligor has the financial ability to contribute to the payment of these medical or dental expenses, the court shall require the obligor to be liable for all or a portion of the medical or dental expenses of the child not covered by the required health or dental plan. Medical and dental expenses include, but are not limited to, necessary orthodontia and eye care, including prescription lenses.

(d) If the obligor is employed by a self-insured employer subject only to the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) of 1974, and the insurance benefit plan meets the above requirements, the court shall order the obligor to enroll the dependents within 30 days of the court order effective date or be liable for all medical and dental expenses occurring while coverage is not in effect. If enrollment in the ERISA plan is precluded by exclusionary clauses, the court shall order the obligor to obtain other coverage or make payments as provided in paragraph (b) or (c).

(e) Unless otherwise agreed by the parties and approved by the court, if the court finds that the obligee is not receiving public assistance for the child and has the financial ability to contribute to the cost of medical and dental expenses for the child, including the cost of insurance, the court shall order the obligee and obligor to each assume a portion of these expenses based on their proportionate share of their total net income as defined in section 518.54, subdivision 6.

(f) Payments ordered under this section are subject to section 518.611. An obligee who fails to apply payments received to the medical expenses of the dependents may be found in contempt of this order.

**Subd. 2. Spousal or ex-spousal coverage.** The court shall require the obligor to provide dependent health and dental insurance for the benefit of the obligee if it is available at no additional cost to the obligor and in this case the provisions of this section apply.

**Subd. 2a. Employer and obligor notice.** If an individual is hired for employment, the employer shall request that the individual disclose whether the individual has court-ordered medical support obligations that are required by law to be withheld from income and the terms of the court order, if any. The employer shall request that the individual disclose whether the individual has been ordered by a court to provide health and dental dependent insurance coverage. The individual shall disclose this information at the time of hiring. If an individual discloses that medical support is required to be withheld, the employer shall begin withholding according to the terms of the order and pursuant to section 518.611, subdivision 8. If an individual discloses an obligation to obtain health and dental dependent insurance coverage and coverage is available through the employer, the employer shall make all application processes known to the individual upon hiring and enroll the employee and dependent in the plan pursuant to subdivision 3.

**Subd. 3. Implementation.** A copy of the court order for insurance coverage shall be forwarded to the obligor's employer or union by the obligee or the public authority responsible for support enforcement only when ordered by the court or when the following conditions are met:

(1) the obligor fails to provide written proof to the obligee or the public authority, within 30 days of the effective date of the court order, that the insurance has been obtained or that application for insurability has been made;

(2) the obligee or the public authority serves written notice of its intent to enforce medical support on the obligor by mail at the obligor's last known post office address; and

(3) the obligor fails within 15 days after the mailing of the notice to provide written proof to the obligee or the public authority that the insurance coverage existed as of the date of mailing.

The employer or union shall forward a copy of the order to the health and dental insurance plan offered by the employer.

**Subd. 4. Effect of order.** (a) The order is binding on the employer or union and the health and dental insurance plan when service under subdivision 3 has been made. Upon receipt of the order, or upon application of the obligor pursuant to the order, the employer or union and its health and dental insurance plan shall enroll the minor child as a beneficiary in the group insurance plan and withhold any required premium from the obligor's income or wages. If more than one plan is offered by the employer or union, the child shall be enrolled in the insurance plan in which the obligor is enrolled or the least costly plan otherwise available to the obligor that is comparable to a number two qualified plan.

(b) An employer or union that willfully fails to comply with the order is liable for any health or dental expenses incurred by the dependents during the period of time the dependents were eligible to be enrolled in the insurance program, and for any other premium costs incurred because the employer or union willfully failed to comply with the order. An employer or union that fails to comply with the order is subject to contempt under section 518.615 and is also subject to a fine of \$500 to be paid to the obligee or public authority. Fines paid to the public authority are designated for child support enforcement services.

(c) Failure of the obligor to execute any documents necessary to enroll the dependent in the group health and dental insurance plan will not affect the obligation of the employer or union and group health and dental insurance plan to enroll the dependent in a plan for which other eligibility requirements are met. Information and authorization provided by the public authority responsible for child support enforcement, or by the custodial parent or guardian, is valid for the purposes of meeting enrollment requirements of the health plan. The insurance coverage for a child eligible under subdivision 5 shall not be terminated except as authorized in subdivision 5.

*[For text of subd 5, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 6. Insurer reimbursement; correspondence and notice.** (a) The signature of the custodial parent of the insured dependent is a valid authorization to the insurer for purposes of processing an insurance reimbursement payment to the provider of the medical services or to the custodial parent if medical services have been prepaid by the custodial parent.

(b) The insurer shall send copies of all correspondence regarding the insurance coverage to both parents. When an order for dependent insurance coverage is in effect and the obligor's employment is terminated, or the insurance coverage is terminated, the insurer shall notify the obligee within ten days of the termination date with notice of conversion privileges.

**Subd. 7. Release of information.** When an order for dependent insurance coverage is in effect, the obligor's employer, union, or insurance agent shall release to the obligee or the public authority, upon request, information on the dependent coverage, including the name of the insurer. Notwithstanding any other law, information reported pursuant to section 268.121 shall be released to the public agency responsible for support enforcement that is enforcing an order for medical or dental insurance coverage under this section. The public agency responsible for support enforcement is authorized to release to the obligor's insurer or employer information necessary to obtain or enforce medical support.

**Subd. 8. Obligor liability.** (a) An obligor who fails to maintain medical or dental insurance for the benefit of the children as ordered or fails to provide other medical support as ordered is liable to the obligee for any medical or dental expenses incurred from the effective date of the court order, including health and dental insurance premiums paid by the obligee because of the obligor's failure to obtain coverage as ordered. Proof of failure to maintain insurance or noncompliance with an order to provide other medical support constitutes a showing of increased need by the obligee pursuant to section 518.64 and provides a basis for a modification of the obligor's child support order.

(b) Payments for services rendered to the dependents that are directed to the obligor, in the form of reimbursement by the insurer, must be endorsed over to and forwarded to the vendor or custodial parent or public authority when the reimbursement is not owed to the obligor. An obligor retaining insurance reimbursement not owed to the obligor may be found in contempt of this order and held liable for the amount of the reimbursement. Upon written verification by the insurer of the amounts paid to the obligor, the reimbursement amount is subject to all enforcement remedies available under subdivision 10.

*[For text of subd 9, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 10. Enforcement.** Remedies available for the collection and enforcement of child support apply to medical support. For the purpose of enforcement, the costs of individual or group health or hospitalization coverage, dental coverage, all medical costs ordered by the court to be paid by the obligor, including health and dental insurance premiums paid by the obligee because of the obligor's failure to obtain coverage as ordered, or liabilities established pursuant to subdivision 8, are additional child support.

**History:** 1993 c 322 s 8; 1993 c 340 s 21-29

### **518.175 VISITATION OF CHILDREN AND NONCUSTODIAL PARENT.**

*[For text of subds 1 to 5, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 6. Compensatory visitation.** If the court finds that a person has been wrongfully deprived of the duly established right to visitation, the court shall order the custodial parent to permit additional visits to compensate for the visitation of which the person was deprived. Additional visits must be:

- (1) of the same type and duration as the wrongfully denied visit;
- (2) taken within one year after the wrongfully denied visit; and
- (3) at a time acceptable to the person deprived of visitation.

**Subd. 7. Grandparent visitation.** In all proceedings for dissolution or legal separation, after the commencement of the proceeding or at any time after completion of the proceedings, and continuing during the minority of the child, the court may make an order granting visitation rights to grandparents under section 257.022, subdivision 2.

**History:** 1993 c 62 s 2; 1993 c 322 s 9

### **518.177 NOTIFICATION REGARDING DEPRIVATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS LAW.**

Every court order and judgment and decree concerning custody of or visitation with a minor child shall contain the notice set out in section 518.68, subdivision 2.

**History:** 1993 c 322 s 10

### **518.24 SECURITY; SEQUESTRATION; CONTEMPT.**

In all cases when maintenance or support payments are ordered, the court may require sufficient security to be given for the payment of them according to the terms of the order. Upon neglect or refusal to give security, or upon failure to pay the maintenance or support, the court may sequester the obligor's personal estate and the rents and profits of real estate of the obligor, and appoint a receiver of them. The court may cause the personal estate and the rents and profits of the real estate to be applied according to the terms of the order. The obligor is presumed to have an income from a source sufficient to pay the maintenance or support order. A child support or maintenance order constitutes prima facie evidence that the obligor has the ability to pay the award. If the obligor disobeys the order, it is prima facie evidence of contempt.

**History:** 1993 c 340 s 30

**518.54 DEFINITIONS.***[For text of subds 1 to 3, see M.S.1992]*

Subd. 4. **Support money; child support.** "Support money" or "child support" means:

(1) an award in a dissolution, legal separation, annulment, or parentage proceeding for the care, support and education of any child of the marriage or of the parties to the proceeding; or

(2) a contribution by parents ordered under section 256.87.

*[For text of subds 5 to 12, see M.S.1992]***History:** 1993 c 340 s 31**518.55 MAINTENANCE OR SUPPORT MONEY.***[For text of subd 1, see M.S.1992]*

Subd. 2. [Repealed, 1993 c 322 s 21]

Subd. 2a. [Repealed, 1993 c 322 s 21]

Subd. 3. **Notice of address or residence change.** Every obligor shall notify the obligee and the public authority responsible for collection, if applicable, of a change of address or residence within 60 days of the address or residence change. Every order for support or maintenance must contain a conspicuous notice complying with section 518.68, subdivision 2. The court may waive or modify the requirements of this subdivision by order if necessary to protect the obligor from contact by the obligee.

**History:** 1993 c 322 s 11**518.551 MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT PAYMENTS.**

Subdivision 1. **Scope; payment to public agency.** (a) This section applies to all proceedings involving an award of child support.

(b) The court shall direct that all payments ordered for maintenance and support be made to the public agency responsible for child support enforcement so long as the obligee is receiving or has applied for public assistance, or has applied for child support and maintenance collection services. Public authorities responsible for child support enforcement may act on behalf of other public authorities responsible for child support enforcement. This includes the authority to represent the legal interests of or execute documents on behalf of the other public authority in connection with the establishment, enforcement, and collection of child support, maintenance, or medical support, and collection on judgments. Amounts received by the public agency responsible for child support enforcement greater than the amount granted to the obligee shall be remitted to the obligee.

Subd. 5. **Notice to public authority; guidelines.** (a) The petitioner shall notify the public authority of all proceedings for dissolution, legal separation, determination of parentage or for the custody of a child, if either party is receiving aid to families with dependent children or applies for it subsequent to the commencement of the proceeding. The notice must contain the full names of the parties to the proceeding, their social security account numbers, and their birth dates. After receipt of the notice, the court shall set child support as provided in this subdivision. The court may order either or both parents owing a duty of support to a child of the marriage to pay an amount reasonable or necessary for the child's support, without regard to marital misconduct. The court shall approve a child support stipulation of the parties if each party is represented by independent counsel, unless the stipulation does not meet the conditions of paragraph (i). In other cases the court shall determine and order child support in a specific dollar amount in accordance with the guidelines and the other factors set forth in paragraph (b) and any departure therefrom. The court may also order the obligor to pay child support in the form of a percentage share of the obligor's net bonuses, commis-

sions, or other forms of compensation, in addition to, or if the obligor receives no base pay, in lieu of, an order for a specific dollar amount.

(b) The court shall derive a specific dollar amount for child support by multiplying the obligor's net income by the percentage indicated by the following guidelines:

Net Income Per Month of Obligor	Number of Children						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 or more
\$550 and Below	Order based on the ability of the obligor to provide support at these income levels, or at higher levels, if the obligor has the earning ability.						
\$551 - 600	16%	19%	22%	25%	28%	30%	32%
\$601 - 650	17%	21%	24%	27%	29%	32%	34%
\$651 - 700	18%	22%	25%	28%	31%	34%	36%
\$701 - 750	19%	23%	27%	30%	33%	36%	38%
\$751 - 800	20%	24%	28%	31%	35%	38%	40%
\$801 - 850	21%	25%	29%	33%	36%	40%	42%
\$851 - 900	22%	27%	31%	34%	38%	41%	44%
\$901 - 950	23%	28%	32%	36%	40%	43%	46%
\$951 - 1000	24%	29%	34%	38%	41%	45%	48%
\$1001 - 5000	25%	30%	35%	39%	43%	47%	50%
or the amount in effect under paragraph (k)							

Guidelines for support for an obligor with a monthly income in excess of the income limit currently in effect under paragraph (k) shall be the same dollar amounts as provided for in the guidelines for an obligor with a monthly income equal to the limit in effect.

Net Income defined as:

Total monthly  
income less

- \*(i) Federal Income Tax
- \*(ii) State Income Tax
- (iii) Social Security  
Deductions
- (iv) Reasonable  
Pension Deductions

\*Standard  
Deductions apply-  
use of tax tables  
recommended

- (v) Union Dues
- (vi) Cost of Dependent Health  
Insurance Coverage
- (vii) Cost of Individual or Group  
Health/Hospitalization  
Coverage or an  
Amount for Actual  
Medical Expenses
- (viii) A Child Support or  
Maintenance Order that is  
Currently Being Paid.

"Net income" does not include:

(1) the income of the obligor's spouse, but does include in-kind payments received by the obligor in the course of employment, self-employment, or operation of a business if the payments reduce the obligor's living expenses; or

(2) compensation received by a party for employment in excess of a 40-hour work week, provided that:

(i) support is nonetheless ordered in an amount at least equal to the guidelines amount based on income not excluded under this clause; and

(ii) the party demonstrates, and the court finds, that:

(A) the excess employment began after the filing of the petition for dissolution;

(B) the excess employment reflects an increase in the work schedule or hours worked over that of the two years immediately preceding the filing of the petition;

(C) the excess employment is voluntary and not a condition of employment;

(D) the excess employment is in the nature of additional, part-time or overtime employment compensable by the hour or fraction of an hour; and

(E) the party's compensation structure has not been changed for the purpose of affecting a support or maintenance obligation.

The court shall review the work-related and education-related child care costs of the custodial parent and shall allocate the costs to each parent in proportion to each parent's income after the transfer of child support, unless the allocation would be substantially unfair to either parent. The cost of child care for purposes of this section is determined by subtracting the amount of any federal and state income tax credits available to a parent from the actual cost paid for child care. The amount allocated for child care expenses is considered child support.

(c) In addition to the child support guidelines, the court shall take into consideration the following factors in setting or modifying child support or in determining whether to deviate from the guidelines:

(1) all earnings, income, and resources of the parents, including real and personal property, but excluding income from excess employment of the obligor or obligee that meets the criteria of paragraph (b), clause (2)(ii);

(2) the financial needs and resources, physical and emotional condition, and educational needs of the child or children to be supported;

(3) the standards of living the child would have enjoyed had the marriage not been dissolved, but recognizing that the parents now have separate households;

(4) which parent receives the income taxation dependency exemption and what financial benefit the parent receives from it;

(5) the parents' debts as provided in paragraph (d); and

(6) the obligor's receipt of assistance under sections 256.72 to 256.87 or 256B.01 to 256B.40.

(d) In establishing or modifying a support obligation, the court may consider debts owed to private creditors, but only if:

(1) the right to support has not been assigned under section 256.74;

(2) the court determines that the debt was reasonably incurred for necessary support of the child or parent or for the necessary generation of income. If the debt was incurred for the necessary generation of income, the court shall consider only the amount of debt that is essential to the continuing generation of income; and

(3) the party requesting a departure produces a sworn schedule of the debts, with supporting documentation, showing goods or services purchased, the recipient of them, the amount of the original debt, the outstanding balance, the monthly payment, and the number of months until the debt will be fully paid.

(e) Any schedule prepared under paragraph (d), clause (3), shall contain a statement that the debt will be fully paid after the number of months shown in the schedule, barring emergencies beyond the party's control.

(f) Any further departure below the guidelines that is based on a consideration of debts owed to private creditors shall not exceed 18 months in duration, after which the support shall increase automatically to the level ordered by the court. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit one or more step increases in support to reflect debt retirement during the 18-month period.

(g) If payment of debt is ordered pursuant to this section, the payment shall be ordered to be in the nature of child support.



(h) Nothing shall preclude the court from receiving evidence on the above factors to determine if the guidelines should be exceeded or modified in a particular case.

(i) The guidelines in this subdivision are a rebuttable presumption and shall be used in all cases when establishing or modifying child support. If the court does not deviate from the guidelines, the court shall make written findings concerning the amount of the obligor's income used as the basis for the guidelines calculation and any other significant evidentiary factors affecting the determination of child support. If the court deviates from the guidelines, the court shall make written findings giving the amount of support calculated under the guidelines, the reasons for the deviation, and shall specifically address the criteria in paragraph (b) and how the deviation serves the best interest of the child. The provisions of this paragraph apply whether or not the parties are each represented by independent counsel and have entered into a written agreement. The court shall review stipulations presented to it for conformity to the guidelines and the court is not required to conduct a hearing, but the parties shall provide the documentation of earnings required under subdivision 5b.

(j) If the child support payments are assigned to the public agency under section 256.74, the court may not deviate downward from the child support guidelines unless the court specifically finds that the failure to deviate downward would impose an extreme hardship on the obligor.

(k) The dollar amount of the income limit for application of the guidelines must be adjusted on July 1 of every even-numbered year to reflect cost-of-living changes. The supreme court shall select the index for the adjustment from the indices listed in section 518.641. The state court administrator shall make the changes in the dollar amount required by this paragraph available to courts and the public on or before April 30 of the year in which the amount is to change.

*[For text of subd 5a, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 5b. Determination of income.** (a) The parties shall timely serve and file documentation of earnings and income. When there is a prehearing conference, the court must receive the documentation of income at least ten days prior to the prehearing conference. Documentation of earnings and income also includes, but is not limited to, pay stubs for the most recent three months, employer statements, or statement of receipts and expenses if self-employed. Documentation of earnings and income also includes copies of each parent's most recent federal tax returns, including W-2 forms, 1099 forms, unemployment compensation statements, workers' compensation statements, and all other documents evidencing income as received that provide verification of income over a longer period.

(b) In addition to the requirements of paragraph (a), at any time after an action seeking child support has been commenced or when a child support order is in effect, a party or the public authority may require the other party to give them a copy of the party's most recent federal tax returns that were filed with the Internal Revenue Service. The party shall provide a copy of the tax returns within 30 days of receipt of the request unless the request is not made in good faith. A request under this paragraph may not be made more than once every two years, in the absence of good cause.

(c) If a parent under the jurisdiction of the court does not appear at a court hearing after proper notice of the time and place of the hearing, the court shall set income for that parent based on credible evidence before the court or in accordance with paragraph (d). Credible evidence may include documentation of current or recent income, testimony of the other parent concerning recent earnings and income levels, and the parent's wage reports filed with the Minnesota department of jobs and training under section 268.121.

(d) If the court finds that a parent is voluntarily unemployed or underemployed, child support shall be calculated based on a determination of imputed income. A parent is not considered voluntarily unemployed or underemployed upon a showing by the parent that the unemployment or underemployment: (1) is temporary and will ultimately lead to an increase in income; or (2) represents a bona fide career change that

outweighs the adverse effect of that parent's diminished income on the child. Imputed income means the estimated earning ability of a parent based on the parent's prior earnings history, education, and job skills, and on availability of jobs within the community for an individual with the parent's qualifications. If the court is unable to determine or estimate the earning ability of a parent, the court may calculate child support based on full-time employment of 40 hours per week at the federal minimum wage or the Minnesota minimum wage, whichever is higher. If a parent is a recipient of public assistance under sections 256.72 to 256.87 or chapter 256D, or is physically or mentally incapacitated, it shall be presumed that the parent is not voluntarily unemployed or underemployed.

*[For text of subd 5c, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 5d. Education trust fund.** The parties may agree to designate a sum of money above any court-ordered child support as a trust fund for the costs of post-secondary education.

*[For text of subd 6, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 7. Service fee.** When the public agency responsible for child support enforcement provides child support collection services either to a public assistance recipient or to a party who does not receive public assistance, the public agency may upon written notice to the obligor charge a monthly collection fee equivalent to the full monthly cost to the county of providing collection services, in addition to the amount of the child support which was ordered by the court. The fee shall be deposited in the county general fund. The service fee assessed is limited to ten percent of the monthly court ordered child support and shall not be assessed to obligors who are current in payment of the monthly court ordered child support.

An application fee of \$25 shall be paid by the person who applies for child support and maintenance collection services, except persons who transfer from public assistance to nonpublic assistance status. Fees assessed by state and federal tax agencies for collection of overdue support owed to or on behalf of a person not receiving public assistance must be imposed on the person for whom these services are provided. The public authority upon written notice to the obligee shall assess a fee of \$25 to the person not receiving public assistance for each successful federal tax interception. The fee must be withheld prior to the release of the funds received from each interception and deposited in the general fund.

However, the limitations of this subdivision on the assessment of fees shall not apply to the extent inconsistent with the requirements of federal law for receiving funds for the programs under Title IV-A and Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, United States Code, title 42, sections 601 to 613 and United States Code, title 42, sections 651 to 662.

*[For text of subd 9, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 10. Administrative process for child and medical support orders.** (a) An administrative process is established to obtain, modify, and enforce child and medical support orders and maintenance.

Effective July 1, 1994, all counties shall participate in the administrative process established by this section. All proceedings for obtaining, modifying, or enforcing child and medical support orders and maintenance and adjudicating uncontested parentage proceedings, are required to be conducted in counties designated by the commissioner of human services in which the county human services agency is a party or provides services to a party or parties to the action. These actions must be conducted by an administrative law judge from the office of administrative hearings, except for the following proceedings:

- (1) adjudication of contested parentage;
- (2) motions to set aside a paternity adjudication or declaration of parentage;

(3) evidentiary hearing on contempt motions; and

(4) motions to sentence or to revoke the stay of a jail sentence in contempt proceedings.

(b) An administrative law judge may hear a stipulation reached on a contempt motion, but any stipulation that involves a finding of contempt and a jail sentence, whether stayed or imposed, shall require the review and signature of a district judge.

(c) For the purpose of this process, all powers, duties, and responsibilities conferred on judges of the district court to obtain and enforce child and medical support and maintenance obligations, subject to the limitation set forth herein, are conferred on the administrative law judge conducting the proceedings, including the power to issue orders to show cause and to issue bench warrants for failure to appear.

(d) Before implementing the process in a county, the chief administrative law judge, the commissioner of human services, the director of the county human services agency, the county attorney, county court administrator, and county sheriff shall jointly establish procedures and the county shall provide hearing facilities for implementing this process in a county.

(e) Nonattorney employees of the public agency responsible for child support in the counties designated by the commissioner may prepare, sign, serve, and file complaints and motions for obtaining, modifying, or enforcing child and medical support orders and maintenance and related documents, appear at prehearing conferences, and participate in proceedings before an administrative law judge. This activity shall not be considered to be the unauthorized practice of law.

(f) The hearings shall be conducted under the rules of the office of administrative hearings, Minnesota Rules, parts 1400.7100 to 1400.7500, 1400.7700, and 1400.7800, as adopted by the chief administrative law judge. All other aspects of the case, including, but not limited to, pleadings, discovery, and motions, shall be conducted under the rules of family court, the rules of civil procedure, and chapter 518. The administrative law judge shall make findings of fact, conclusions, and a final decision and issue an order. Orders issued by an administrative law judge are enforceable by the contempt powers of the county and district courts.

(g) The decision and order of the administrative law judge is appealable to the court of appeals in the same manner as a decision of the district court.

(h) The commissioner of human services shall distribute money for this purpose to counties to cover the costs of the administrative process, including the salaries of administrative law judges. If available appropriations are insufficient to cover the costs, the commissioner shall prorate the amount among the counties.

*[For text of subd 11, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 12. Occupational license suspension.** Upon petition of an obligee or public agency responsible for child support enforcement, if the court finds that the obligor is or may be licensed by a licensing board listed in section 214.01 or other state agency or board that issues an occupational license and the obligor is in arrears in court-ordered child support or maintenance payments or both, the court may direct the licensing board or other licensing agency to conduct a hearing under section 214.101 concerning suspension of the obligor's license. If the obligor is a licensed attorney, the court may report the matter to the lawyers professional responsibility board for appropriate action in accordance with the rules of professional conduct. The remedy under this subdivision is in addition to any other enforcement remedy available to the court.

**History:** 1993 c 34 s 1; 1993 c 322 s 12; 1993 c 340 s 32-38; 1Sp1993 c 1 art 6 s 44

## **518.561 EMPLOYER QUESTIONNAIRE AND NOTICE.**

The commissioner of human services shall prepare a questionnaire for use by employers in obtaining information from employees for purposes of complying with sections 518.171, subdivision 2a, and 518.611, subdivision 8. The commissioner shall arrange for public dissemination of the questionnaires and notice to employers of the requirements of these provisions.

**History:** 1993 c 340 s 39

**518.57 MINOR CHILDREN; SUPPORT.**

Subdivision 1. **Order.** Upon a decree of dissolution, legal separation, or annulment, the court shall make a further order which is just and proper concerning the maintenance of the minor children as provided by section 518.551, and for the maintenance of any child of the parties as defined in section 518.54, as support money. The court may make any child support order a lien or charge upon the property of the obligor, either at the time of the entry of the judgment or by subsequent order upon proper application.

*[For text of subds 2 and 3, see M.S.1992]*

Subd. 4. **Other custodians.** If a child resides with a person other than a parent and the court approves of the custody arrangement, the court may order child support payments to be made to the custodian regardless of whether the person has legal custody.

**History:** 1993 c 340 s 40,41

**518.58 DIVISION OF MARITAL PROPERTY.**

*[For text of subds 1 to 3, see M.S.1992]*

Subd. 4. **Pension plans.** (a) The division of marital property that represents pension plan benefits or rights in the form of future pension plan payments:

(1) is payable only to the extent of the amount of the pension plan benefit payable under the terms of the plan;

(2) is not payable for a period that exceeds the time that pension plan benefits are payable to the pension plan benefit recipient;

(3) is not payable in a lump sum amount from pension plan assets attributable in any fashion to a spouse with the status of an active member, deferred retiree, or benefit recipient of a pension plan;

(4) if the former spouse to whom the payments are to be made dies prior to the end of the specified payment period with the right to any remaining payments accruing to an estate or to more than one survivor, is payable only to a trustee on behalf of the estate or the group of survivors for subsequent apportionment by the trustee; and

(5) in the case of public pension plan benefits or rights, may not commence until the public plan member submits a valid application for a public pension plan benefit and the benefit becomes payable.

(b) The individual retirement account plans established under chapter 354B may provide in its plan document, if published and made generally available, for an alternative marital property division or distribution of individual retirement account plan assets. If an alternative division or distribution procedure is provided, it applies in place of paragraph (a), clause (5).

**History:** 1993 c 239 art 4 s 1

**518.583 CAPITAL GAIN ON SALE OF PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE.**

All judgments and decrees involving a principal residence must include the following notice to the parties as a finding of fact or as an appendix:

**“CAPITAL GAIN ON SALE OF PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE**

Income tax laws regarding the capital gain tax may apply to the sale of the parties' principal residence and the parties may wish to consult with an attorney or tax advisor concerning the applicable laws. These laws may include, but are not limited to, the exclusion available on the sale of a principal residence for those over a certain age under section 121 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or other applicable law.”

**History:** 1993 c 322 s 13

**518.585 NOTICE OF INTEREST ON LATE CHILD SUPPORT.**

Any judgment or decree of dissolution or legal separation containing a requirement of child support and any determination of parentage, order under chapter 518C, order under section 256.87, or order under section 260.251 must include a notice to the parties that section 548.091, subdivision 1a, provides for interest to begin accruing on a payment or installment of child support whenever the unpaid amount due is greater than the current support due.

**History:** 1993 c 340 s 49

**518.611 INCOME WITHHOLDING.**

Subdivision 1. **Order.** Whenever an obligation for support of a dependent child or maintenance of a spouse, or both, is determined and ordered by a court of this state, the amount of child support or maintenance as determined by court order must be withheld from the income, regardless of source, of the person obligated to pay the support or maintenance. Every order for maintenance or support must include:

(1) the obligor's social security number and date of birth and the name and address of the obligor's employer or other payor of funds; and

(2) provisions for the obligor to keep the public authority informed of the name and address of the obligor's current employer or payor of funds, and whether the obligor has access to employment-related health insurance coverage and, if so, the health insurance policy information.

Subd. 2. **Conditions of income withholding.** (a) Withholding shall result when:

(1) the obligor requests it in writing to the public authority;

(2) the custodial parent requests it by making a motion to the court; or

(3) the obligor fails to make the maintenance or support payments, and the following conditions are met:

(i) the obligor is at least 30 days in arrears;

(ii) the obligee or the public authority serves written notice of income withholding, showing arrearage, on the obligor at least 15 days before service of the notice of income withholding and a copy of the court's order on the payor of funds;

(iii) within the 15-day period, the obligor fails to move the court to deny withholding on the grounds that an arrearage of at least 30 days does not exist as of the date of the notice of income withholding, or on other grounds limited to mistakes of fact, and, ex parte, to stay service on the payor of funds until the motion to deny withholding is heard;

(iv) the obligee or the public authority serves a copy of the notice of income withholding, a copy of the court's order or notice of order, and the provisions of this section on the payor of funds; and

(v) the obligee serves on the public authority a copy of the notice of income withholding, a copy of the court's order, an application, and the fee to use the public authority's collection services.

For those persons not applying for the public authority's IV-D services, a monthly service fee of \$15 must be charged to the obligor in addition to the amount of child support ordered by the court and withheld through automatic income withholding, or for persons applying for the public authority's IV-D services, the service fee under section 518.551, subdivision 7, applies. The county agency shall explain to affected persons the services available and encourage the applicant to apply for IV-D services.

(b) To pay the arrearage specified in the notice of income withholding, the employer or payor of funds shall withhold from the obligor's income an additional amount equal to 20 percent of the monthly child support or maintenance obligation until the arrearage is paid.

(c) The obligor may move the court, under section 518.64, to modify the order respecting the amount of maintenance or support.

(d) Every order for support or maintenance shall provide for a conspicuous notice

of the provisions of this subdivision that complies with section 518.68, subdivision 2. An order without this notice remains subject to this subdivision.

(e) Absent a court order to the contrary, if an arrearage exists at the time an order for ongoing support or maintenance would otherwise terminate, income withholding shall continue in effect in an amount equal to the former support or maintenance obligation plus an additional amount equal to 20 percent of the monthly child support obligation, until all arrears have been paid in full.

*[For text of subds 2a and 3, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 4. Effect of order.** (a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the order is binding on the employer, trustee, payor of the funds, or financial institution when service under subdivision 2 has been made. Withholding must begin no later than the first pay period that occurs after 14 days following the date of the notice. In the case of a financial institution, preauthorized transfers must occur in accordance with a court-ordered payment schedule. An employer, payor of funds, or financial institution in this state is required to withhold income according to court orders for withholding issued by other states or territories. The payor shall withhold from the income payable to the obligor the amount specified in the order and amounts required under subdivision 2 and section 518.613 and shall remit, within ten days of the date the obligor is paid the remainder of the income, the amounts withheld to the public authority. The payor shall identify on the remittance information the date the obligor is paid the remainder of the income. The obligor is considered to have paid the amount withheld as of the date the obligor received the remainder of the income. The financial institution shall execute preauthorized transfers from the deposit accounts of the obligor in the amount specified in the order and amounts required under subdivision 2 as directed by the public authority responsible for child support enforcement.

(b) Employers may combine all amounts withheld from one pay period into one payment to each public authority, but shall separately identify each obligor making payment. Amounts received by the public authority which are in excess of public assistance expended for the party or for a child shall be remitted to the party.

(c) An employer shall not discharge, or refuse to hire, or otherwise discipline an employee as a result of a wage or salary withholding authorized by this section. The employer or other payor of funds shall be liable to the obligee for any amounts required to be withheld. A financial institution is liable to the obligee if funds in any of the obligor's deposit accounts identified in the court order equal the amount stated in the pre-authorization agreement but are not transferred by the financial institution in accordance with the agreement. An employer or other payor of funds that fails to withhold or transfer funds in accordance with this section is also liable to the obligee for interest on the funds at the rate applicable to judgments under section 549.09, computed from the date the funds were required to be withheld or transferred. An employer or other payor of funds is liable for reasonable attorney fees of the obligee or public authority incurred in enforcing the liability under this paragraph. An employer or other payor of funds that has failed to comply with the requirements of this section is subject to contempt sanctions under section 518.615.

*[For text of subd 5, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 6. Priority.** An order for withholding under this section or execution or garnishment upon a judgment for child support arrearages or preadjudicated expenses shall have priority over an attachment, execution, garnishment, or wage assignment and shall not be subject to the statutory limitations on amounts levied against the income of the obligor. Amounts withheld from an employee's income must not exceed the maximum permitted under the Consumer Credit Protection Act, United States Code, title 15, section 1673(b)(2). If there is more than one withholding order on a single employee, the payor of funds shall comply with all of the orders to the extent that the total amount withheld from the payor's income does not exceed the limits imposed under the Consumer Credit Protection Act, giving priority to amounts designated in each order as current support as follows:

(1) if the total of the amounts designated in the orders as current support exceeds the amount available for income withholding, the payor of funds shall allocate to each order an amount for current support equal to the amount designated in that order as current support, divided by the total of the amounts designated in the orders as current support, multiplied by the amount of the income available for income withholding; and

(2) if the total of the amounts designated in the orders as current support does not exceed the amount available for income withholding, the payor of funds shall pay the amounts designated as current support, and shall allocate to each order an amount for past due support equal to the amount designated in that order as past due support, divided by the total of the amounts designated in the orders as past due support, multiplied by the amount of income remaining available for income withholding after the payment of current support.

Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, funds from income sources included in section 518.54, subdivision 6, whether periodic or lump sum, are not exempt from attachment or execution upon a judgment for child support arrearages.

*[For text of subs 7 to 11, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 12. Interstate income withholding.** Upon receipt of an order for support entered in another state, with the specified documentation from an authorized agency, the public authority shall implement income withholding under subdivision 2. If the obligor requests a hearing under subdivision 3 to contest withholding, the court administrator shall enter the order. Entry of the order shall not confer jurisdiction on the courts or administrative agencies of this state for any purpose other than contesting implementation of income withholding.

**History:** 1993 c 322 s 14; 1993 c 340 s 42; 1Sp1993 c 1 art 6 s 45-48

## **518.613 AUTOMATIC WITHHOLDING.**

**Subdivision 1. General.** Notwithstanding any provision of section 518.611, subdivision 2 or 3, to the contrary, whenever an obligation for child support or maintenance, enforced by the public authority, is initially determined and ordered or modified by the court in a county in which this section applies, the amount of child support or maintenance ordered by the court and any fees assessed by the public authority responsible for child support enforcement must be withheld from the income, regardless of source, of the person obligated to pay the support.

**Subd. 2. Order; collection services.** Every order for child support must include the obligor's social security number and date of birth and the name and address of the obligor's employer or other payor of funds. In addition, every order must contain provisions requiring the obligor to keep the public authority informed of the name and address of the obligor's current employer, or other payor of funds and whether the obligor has access to employment-related health insurance coverage and, if so, the health insurance policy information. Upon entry of the order for support or maintenance, the court shall mail a copy of the court's automatic income withholding order and the provisions of section 518.611 and this section to the obligor's employer or other payor of funds and to the public authority responsible for child support enforcement. An obligee who is not a recipient of public assistance must decide to either apply for the IV-D collection services of the public authority or obtain income withholding only services when an order for support is entered unless the requirements of this section have been waived under subdivision 7. The supreme court shall develop a standard automatic income withholding form to be used by all Minnesota courts. This form shall be made a part of any order for support or decree by reference.

**Subd. 3. Withholding.** The employer or other payor shall withhold and forward the child support or maintenance ordered in the manner and within the time limits provided in section 518.611. Amounts received from employers or other payors under this section by the public agency responsible for child support enforcement that are in excess of public assistance received by the obligee must be remitted to the obligee. A county in which this section applies may contract for services to carry out the provisions of this section.

**Subd. 4. Application.** On and after November 1, 1990, this section applies to all child support and maintenance obligations that are initially ordered or modified on and after November 1, 1990, and that are being enforced by the public authority. Effective January 1, 1994, this section applies to all child support and maintenance obligations ordered or modified by the court. Those persons not applying for the public authority's IV-D services must pay a monthly service fee of \$15. The fee will be charged to the obligor in addition to the amount of the child support which was ordered by the court. Persons applying for the public authority's IV-D services will pay the service fee under section 518.551, subdivision 7.

*[For text of subds 6 and 7, see M.S.1992]*

**History:** 1993 c 340 s 43; 1Sp1993 c 1 art 6 s 49-51

### 518.615 EMPLOYER CONTEMPT.

**Subdivision 1. Orders binding.** Income withholding or medical support orders issued pursuant to sections 518.171, 518.611, and 518.613 are binding on the employer, trustee, or other payor of funds after the order and notice of income withholding or enforcement of medical support has been served on the employer, trustee, or payor of funds.

**Subd. 2. Contempt action.** An obligee or the public agency responsible for child support enforcement may initiate a contempt action against an employer, trustee, or payor of funds, within the action that created the support obligation, by serving an order to show cause upon the employer, trustee, or payor of funds.

The employer, trustee, or payor of funds is presumed to be in contempt:

(1) if the employer, trustee, or payor of funds has intentionally failed to withhold support after receiving the order and notice of income withholding or notice of enforcement of medical support; or

(2) upon presentation of pay stubs or similar documentation showing the employer, trustee, or payor of funds withheld support and demonstration that the employer, trustee, or payor of funds intentionally failed to remit support to the agency responsible for child support enforcement.

**Subd. 3. Liability.** The employer, trustee, or payor of funds is liable to the obligee or the agency responsible for child support enforcement for any amounts required to be withheld that were not paid. The court may enter judgment against the employer, trustee, or payor of funds for support not withheld or remitted. The court may also impose contempt sanctions under chapter 588.

**History:** 1993 c 340 s 44

### 518.64 MODIFICATION OF ORDERS OR DECREES.

**Subdivision 1.** After an order for maintenance or support money, temporary or permanent, or for the appointment of trustees to receive property awarded as maintenance or support money, the court may from time to time, on motion of either of the parties, a copy of which is served on the public authority responsible for child support enforcement if payments are made through it, or on motion of the public authority responsible for support enforcement, modify the order respecting the amount of maintenance or support money, and the payment of it, and also respecting the appropriation and payment of the principal and income of property held in trust, and may make an order respecting these matters which it might have made in the original proceeding, except as herein otherwise provided. A party or the public authority also may bring a motion for contempt of court if the obligor is in arrears in support or maintenance payments.

**Subd. 2. Modification.** (a) The terms of an order respecting maintenance or support may be modified upon a showing of one or more of the following: (1) substantially increased or decreased earnings of a party; (2) substantially increased or decreased need of a party or the child or children that are the subject of these proceedings; (3) receipt



of assistance under sections 256.72 to 256.87 or 256B.01 to 256B.40; (4) a change in the cost of living for either party as measured by the federal bureau of statistics, any of which makes the terms unreasonable and unfair; (5) extraordinary medical expenses of the child not provided for under section 518.171; or (6) the addition or elimination of work-related or education-related child care expenses of the obligee or a substantial increase or decrease in existing work-related or education-related child care expenses.

It is presumed that there has been a substantial change in circumstances under clause (1), (2), or (4) and the terms of a current support order shall be rebuttably presumed to be unreasonable and unfair if the application of the child support guidelines in section 518.551, subdivision 5, to the current circumstances of the parties results in a calculated court order that is at least 20 percent and at least \$50 per month higher or lower than the current support order.

(b) On a motion for modification of maintenance, including a motion for the extension of the duration of a maintenance award, the court shall apply, in addition to all other relevant factors, the factors for an award of maintenance under section 518.552 that exist at the time of the motion. On a motion for modification of support, the court:

(1) shall apply section 518.551, subdivision 5, and shall not consider the financial circumstances of each party's spouse, if any; and

(2) shall not consider compensation received by a party for employment in excess of a 40-hour work week, provided that the party demonstrates, and the court finds, that:

(i) the excess employment began after entry of the existing support order;

(ii) the excess employment is voluntary and not a condition of employment;

(iii) the excess employment is in the nature of additional, part-time employment, or overtime employment compensable by the hour or fractions of an hour;

(iv) the party's compensation structure has not been changed for the purpose of affecting a support or maintenance obligation;

(v) in the case of an obligor, current child support payments are at least equal to the guidelines amount based on income not excluded under this clause; and

(vi) in the case of an obligor who is in arrears in child support payments to the obligee, any net income from excess employment must be used to pay the arrearages until the arrearages are paid in full.

(c) A modification of support or maintenance may be made retroactive only with respect to any period during which the petitioning party has pending a motion for modification but only from the date of service of notice of the motion on the responding party and on the public authority if public assistance is being furnished or the county attorney is the attorney of record. However, modification may be applied to an earlier period if the court makes express findings that the party seeking modification was precluded from serving a motion by reason of a significant physical or mental disability, a material misrepresentation of another party, or fraud upon the court and that the party seeking modification, when no longer precluded, promptly served a motion.

(d) Except for an award of the right of occupancy of the homestead, provided in section 518.63, all divisions of real and personal property provided by section 518.58 shall be final, and may be revoked or modified only where the court finds the existence of conditions that justify reopening a judgment under the laws of this state, including motions under section 518.145, subdivision 2. The court may impose a lien or charge on the divided property at any time while the property, or subsequently acquired property, is owned by the parties or either of them, for the payment of maintenance or support money, or may sequester the property as is provided by section 518.24.

(e) The court need not hold an evidentiary hearing on a motion for modification of maintenance or support.

(f) Section 518.14 shall govern the award of attorney fees for motions brought under this subdivision.

*[For text of subds 3 and 4, see M.S.1992]*

**Subd. 5. Form.** The department of human services shall prepare and make available to courts, obligors and persons to whom child support is owed a form to be submitted by the obligor or the person to whom child support is owed in support of a motion for a modification of an order for support or maintenance or for contempt of court. The rulemaking provisions of chapter 14 shall not apply to the preparation of the form.

**Subd. 6. Expedited procedure.** (a) The public authority may seek a modification of the child support order in accordance with the rules of civil procedure or under the expedited procedures in this subdivision.

(b) The public authority may serve the following documents upon the obligor either by certified mail or in the manner provided for service of other pleadings under the rules of civil procedure:

(i) a notice of its application for modification of the obligor's support order stating the amount and effective date of the proposed modification which date shall be no sooner than 30 days from the date of service;

(ii) an affidavit setting out the basis for the modification under subdivision 2, including evidence of the current income of the parties;

(iii) any other documents the public authority intends to file with the court in support of the modification;

(iv) the proposed order;

(v) notice to the obligor that if the obligor fails to move the court and request a hearing on the issue of modification of the support order within 30 days of service of the notice of application for modification, the public authority will likely obtain an order, ex parte, modifying the support order; and

(vi) an explanation to the obligor of how a hearing can be requested, together with a motion for review form that the obligor can complete and file with the court to request a hearing.

(c) If the obligor moves the court for a hearing, any modification must be stayed until the court has had the opportunity to determine the issue. Any modification ordered by the court is effective on the date set out in the notice of application for modification, but no earlier than 30 days following the date the obligor was served.

(d) If the obligor fails to move the court for hearing within 30 days of service of the notice, the public authority shall file with the court a copy of the notice served on the obligor as well as all documents served on the obligor, proof of service, and a proposed order modifying support.

(e) If, following judicial review, the court determines that the procedures provided for in this subdivision have been followed and the requested modification is appropriate, the order shall be signed ex parte and entered.

(f) Failure of the court to enter an order under this subdivision does not prejudice the right of the public authority or either party to seek modification in accordance with the rules of civil procedure.

(g) The supreme court shall develop standard forms for the notice of application of modification of the support order, the supporting affidavit, the obligor's responsive motion, and proposed order granting the modification.

**History:** 1993 c 340 s 45-48; 1Sp1993 c 1 art 6 s 52

## **518.641 COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS IN MAINTENANCE OR CHILD SUPPORT ORDER.**

**Subdivision 1. Requirement.** An order for maintenance or child support shall provide for a biennial adjustment in the amount to be paid based on a change in the cost of living. An order that provides for a cost-of-living adjustment shall specify the cost-of-living index to be applied and the date on which the cost-of-living adjustment shall become effective. The court may use the consumer price index for all urban consumers, Minneapolis-St. Paul (CPI-U), the consumer price index for wage earners and clerical, Minneapolis-St. Paul (CPI-W), or another cost-of-living index published by the depart-

ment of labor which it specifically finds is more appropriate. Cost-of-living increases under this section shall be compounded. The court may also increase the amount by more than the cost-of-living adjustment by agreement of the parties or by making further findings. The adjustment becomes effective on the first of May of the year in which it is made, for cases in which payment is made to the public authority. For cases in which payment is not made to the public authority, application for an adjustment may be made in any month but no application for an adjustment may be made sooner than two years after the date of the dissolution decree. A court may waive the requirement of the cost-of-living clause if it expressly finds that the obligor's occupation or income, or both, does not provide for cost-of-living adjustment or that the order for maintenance or child support has a provision such as a step increase that has the effect of a cost-of-living clause. The court may waive a cost-of-living adjustment in a maintenance order if the parties so agree in writing. The commissioner of human services may promulgate rules for child support adjustments under this section in accordance with the rulemaking provisions of chapter 14. Notice of this statute must comply with section 518.68, subdivision 2.

*[For text of subds 2 to 5, see M.S.1992]*

**History:** 1993 c 322 s 15

#### **518.68 REQUIRED NOTICES.**

Subdivision 1. **Requirement.** Every court order for judgment and decree that provides for child support, spousal maintenance, custody, or visitation must contain certain notices as set out in subdivision 2. The information in the notices must be concisely stated in plain language. The notices must be in clearly legible print, but may not exceed two pages. An order or judgment and decree without the notice remains subject to all statutes. The court may waive all or part of the notice required under subdivision 2 relating to parental rights under section 518.17, subdivision 3, if it finds it is necessary to protect the welfare of a party or child.

Subd. 2. **Contents.** The required notices must be substantially as follows:

#### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

##### **1. PAYMENTS TO PUBLIC AGENCY**

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 518.551, subdivision 1, payments ordered for maintenance and support must be paid to the public agency responsible for child support enforcement as long as the person entitled to receive the payments is receiving or has applied for public assistance or has applied for support and maintenance collection services. MAIL PAYMENTS TO:

##### **2. DEPRIVING ANOTHER OF CUSTODIAL OR PARENTAL RIGHTS — A FELONY**

A person may be charged with a felony who conceals a minor child or takes, obtains, retains, or fails to return a minor child from or to the child's parent (or person with custodial or visitation rights), pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 609.26. A copy of that section is available from any district court clerk.

##### **3. RULES OF SUPPORT, MAINTENANCE, VISITATION**

(a) Payment of support or spousal maintenance is to be as ordered, and the giving of gifts or making purchases of food, clothing, and the like will not fulfill the obligation.

(b) Payment of support must be made as it becomes due, and failure to secure or denial of rights of visitation is NOT an excuse for nonpayment, but the aggrieved party must seek relief through a proper motion filed with the court.

(c) The payment of support or spousal maintenance takes priority over payment of debts and other obligations.

(d) A party who remarries after dissolution and accepts additional obligations of support does so with the full knowledge of the party's prior obligation under this proceeding.

(e) Child support or maintenance is based on annual income, and it is the responsibility of a person with seasonal employment to budget income so that payments are made throughout the year as ordered.

#### 4. PARENTAL RIGHTS FROM MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 518.17, SUBDIVISION 3

Unless otherwise provided by the Court:

(a) Each party has the right of access to, and to receive copies of, school, medical, dental, religious training, and other important records and information about the minor children. Each party has the right of access to information regarding health or dental insurance available to the minor children. Presentation of a copy of this order to the custodian of a record or other information about the minor children constitutes sufficient authorization for the release of the record or information to the requesting party.

(b) Each party shall keep the other informed as to the name and address of the school of attendance of the minor children. Each party has the right to be informed by school officials about the children's welfare, educational progress and status, and to attend school and parent teacher conferences. The school is not required to hold a separate conference for each party.

(c) In case of an accident or serious illness of a minor child, each party shall notify the other party of the accident or illness, and the name of the health care provider and the place of treatment.

(d) Each party has the right of reasonable access and telephone contact with the minor children.

#### 5. WAGE AND INCOME DEDUCTION OF SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE

Child support and/or spousal maintenance may be withheld from income, with or without notice to the person obligated to pay, when the conditions of Minnesota Statutes, sections 518.611 and 518.613, have been met. A copy of those sections is available from any district court clerk.

#### 6. CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR RESIDENCE

Unless otherwise ordered, the person responsible to make support or maintenance payments shall notify the person entitled to receive the payment and the public authority responsible for collection, if applicable, of a change of address or residence within 60 days of the address or residence change.

#### 7. COST OF LIVING INCREASE OF SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE

Child support and/or spousal maintenance may be adjusted every two years based upon a change in the cost of living (using Department of Labor Consumer Price Index ....., unless otherwise specified in this order) when the conditions of Minnesota Statutes, section 518.641, are met. Cost of living increases are compounded. A copy of Minnesota Statutes, section 518.641, and forms necessary to request or contest a cost of living increase are available from any district court clerk.

#### 8. JUDGMENTS FOR UNPAID SUPPORT

If a person fails to make a child support payment, the payment owed becomes a judgment against the person responsible to make the payment by operation of law on or after the date the payment is due, and the person entitled to receive the payment or the public agency may obtain entry and docketing of the judgment WITHOUT NOTICE to the person responsible to make the payment under Minnesota Statutes, section 548.091.

**9. JUDGMENTS FOR UNPAID MAINTENANCE**

A judgment for unpaid spousal maintenance may be entered when the conditions of Minnesota Statutes, section 548.091, are met. A copy of that section is available from any district court clerk.

**10. MEDICAL INSURANCE AND EXPENSES**

The person responsible to pay support and the person's employer or union are ordered to provide medical and dental insurance and pay for uncovered expenses under the conditions of Minnesota Statutes, section 518.171, unless otherwise provided in this order or the statute. A copy of this statute is available from any district court clerk.

Subd. 3. **Copies of law and forms.** The district court administrator shall make available at no charge copies of sections 518.17, 518.611, 518.613, 518.641, 548.091, and 609.26, and shall provide forms to request or contest a cost-of-living increase under section 518.641.

**History:** 1993 c 322 s 16