

518A.39 MODIFICATION OF ORDERS OR DECREES.

Subdivision 1. **Authority.** After an order under this chapter or chapter 518 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, any of which makes the terms unreasonable and unfair: (1) substantially increased or decreased gross income of an obligor or obligee; (2) substantially increased or decreased need of an obligor or obligee or the child or children that are the subject of these proceedings; (3) receipt of assistance under the AFDC program formerly codified under sections 256.72 to 256.87 or 256B.01 to 256B.40, or chapter 256J or 256K; (4) a change in the cost of living for either party as measured by the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics; (5) extraordinary medical expenses of the child not provided for under section 518A.41; (6) a change in the availability of appropriate health care coverage or a substantial increase or decrease in health care coverage costs; (7) the addition 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; or (8) upon the emancipation of the child, as provided in subdivision 5.

(b) It is presumed that there has been a substantial change in circumstances under paragraph (a) and the terms of a current support order shall be rebuttably presumed to be unreasonable and unfair if:

(1) the application of the child support guidelines in section 518A.35, to the current circumstances of the parties results in a calculated court order that is at least 20 percent and at least \$75 per month higher or lower than the current support order or, if the current support order is less than \$75, it results in a calculated court order that is at least 20 percent per month higher or lower;

(2) the medical support provisions of the order established under section 518A.41 are not enforceable by the public authority or the obligee;

(3) health coverage ordered under section 518A.41 is not available to the child for whom the order is established by the parent ordered to provide;

(4) the existing support obligation is in the form of a statement of percentage and not a specific dollar amount;

(5) the gross income of an obligor or obligee has decreased by at least 20 percent through no fault or choice of the party; or

(6) a deviation was granted based on the factor in section 518A.43, subdivision 1, clause (4), and the child no longer resides in a foreign country or the factor is otherwise no longer applicable.

(c) A child support order is not presumptively modifiable solely because an obligor or obligee becomes responsible for the support of an additional nonjoint child, which is born after an existing order. Section 518A.33 shall be considered if other grounds are alleged which allow a modification of support.

(d) 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 518A.35, 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.

(e) A modification of support or maintenance, including interest that accrued pursuant to section 548.091, 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.

(f) 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 518A.71.

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

(h) Sections 518.14 and 518A.735 shall govern the award of attorney fees for motions brought under this subdivision.

(i) Except as expressly provided, an enactment, amendment, or repeal of law does not constitute a substantial change in the circumstances for purposes of modifying a child support order.

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(k) On the first modification under the income shares method of calculation, the modification of basic support may be limited if the amount of the full variance would create hardship for either the obligor or the obligee.

Subd. 3. Maintenance on death or remarriage. Unless otherwise agreed in writing or expressly provided in the decree, the obligation to pay future maintenance is terminated upon the death of either party or the remarriage of the party receiving maintenance.

Subd. 4. Child support on death of obligor. Unless otherwise agreed in writing or expressly provided in the order, provisions for the support of a child are not terminated by the death of a parent obligated to support the child. When a parent obligated to pay support dies, the amount of support may be modified, revoked, or commuted to a lump-sum payment, to the extent just and appropriate in the circumstances.

Subd. 5. Automatic termination of support. (a) Unless a court order provides otherwise, a child support obligation in a specific amount per child terminates automatically and without any action by the obligor to reduce, modify, or terminate the order upon the emancipation of the child as provided under section 518A.26, subdivision 5.

(b) A child support obligation for two or more children that is not a support obligation in a specific amount per child continues in the full amount until the emancipation of the last child for whose benefit the order was made, or until further order of the court.

(c) The obligor may request a modification of the obligor's child support order upon the emancipation of a child if there are still minor children under the order. The child support obligation shall be determined based on the income of the parties at the time the modification is sought.

Subd. 6. Form. The state court administrator's office shall prepare and make available to court administrators, 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.

Subd. 7. Child care exception. Child care support must be based on the actual child care expenses. The court may provide that a decrease in the amount of the child care based on a decrease in the actual child care expenses is effective as of the date the expense is decreased.

History: 1951 c 551 s 11; 1974 c 107 s 26; 1978 c 772 s 59; 1979 c 259 s 31; 1981 c 360 art 2 s 48,49; 1982 c 424 s 130; 1983 c 283 s 1; 1983 c 308 s 22,23; 1984 c 654 art 5 s 58; 1985 c 266 s 3; 1986 c 406 s 8; 1987 c 403 art 3 s 90; 1988 c 532 s 14; 1988 c 668 s 24; 1951 c 551 s 11; 1974 c 107 s 26; 1978 c 772 s 59; 1979 c 259 s 31; 1981 c 360 art 2 s 48,49; 1982 c 424 s 130; 1983 c 283 s 1; 1983 c 308 s 22,23; 1984 c 654 art 5 s 58; 1985 c 266 s 3; 1986 c 406 s 8; 1987 c 403 art 3 s 90; 1988 c 532 s 14; 1988 c 668 s 24; 1990 c 574 s 22; 1991 c 266 s 7; 1991 c 292 art 5 s 79; 1993 c 340 s 45-48; 1Sp1993 c 1 art 6 s 52; 1994 c 630 art 11 s 12; 1995 c 257 art 1 s 31; art 3 s 11,12; 1997 c 187 art 2 s 13; 1997 c 245 art 1 s 29; 1998 c 382 art 1 s 20; 1999 c 159 s 139; 1999 c 245 art 7 s 11; 2000 c 458 s 5; 2001 c 51 s 16; 1Sp2001 c 9 art 12 s 14; 2002 c 379 art 1 s 113; 2005 c 164 s 10-12,29; 1Sp2005 c 7 s 26,28; 2006 c 280 s 23,24,46; 2007 c 118 s 7