

Responsible Relatives

What is a responsible relative?

Illinois state law says that a responsible relative is someone who must pay money to help take care of a family member who receives public assistance.

This brochure will not provide information about child support. If you have questions about your responsibility to pay child support, please call the Child Support Help Line toll free at 1-800-447-4278 (voice) or 1-800-526-5812 (TTY).

Am I a responsible relative?

Spouses -

You are a responsible relative if your husband or wife receives public assistance.

Parents -

You are responsible for your child under 18 years of age unless your child has married and is not living with you.

Civil Union Partners (TANF Only) -

You are a responsible relative if your partner receives public assistance.

For more information:

Call or visit your Illinois Department of Human Services' Family Community Resource Center (FCRC).

If you have questions about any Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) program, call or visit your FCRC. We will answer your questions. If you do not know where your FCRC is or if you are unable to go there, you may call the automated helpline 24 hours a day at:

1-800-843-6154

(866) 324-5553 TTY/Nextalk or 711 TTY Relay

You may speak to a representative between:
8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Monday - Friday (except state holidays)

For answers to your questions, you may also write:

Illinois Department of Human Services
Bureau of Customer Support and Services
100 South Grand Avenue East
Springfield, Illinois 62762

Visit our web site at:

www.dhs.state.il.us



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State of Illinois
Department of Human Services

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How does the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) decide how much money I will have to pay?

An IDHS worker will ask you for information about your income and your family situation. This information will help IDHS understand how much money you have and how much you can afford to pay to help take care of your relative. If you are a responsible relative and your spouse or child who receives public assistance does not live with you, the amount of money you must pay is based on your income and the number of people in your family.

If IDHS needs more information to find out if you're a responsible relative, you will receive a **Notice of Obligation to Support**. This notice will ask you to send copies of some or all of the following information:

- A current federal income tax return
- Paycheck stubs
- Pension or retirement check stubs
- Bankruptcy judgements
- A divorce decree
- A separation order

An IDHS worker in the central office will review this information. The review takes about 45 days. IDHS will then mail you an **Administrative Support Order** or a **No Obligation Letter**.

If IDHS decides that you can afford to help take care of your relative, we will mail you an **Administrative Support Order**. This notice will tell you:

- How much you have to pay to help take care of your relative
- When you have to pay the money
- Where to send the money

If IDHS decides that you cannot afford or should not have to pay money to help take care of your relative, we will send you a **No Obligation Letter**. This letter will tell you that you do not have to pay any money.



What do I have to do?

If an IDHS worker asks you for information, you must provide it. If you do not, IDHS may get a court order demanding the information. If you receive an **Administrative Support Order** and do not pay the money, IDHS may take legal action to get the money.



What to do if you think IDHS made a mistake.

If you think IDHS made a mistake, you can ask for a hearing. You must ask for a hearing in writing within 30 days of the date you received your **Administrative Support Order**.

For more information about your right to appeal and how to receive a fair hearing, ask your caseworker or call the Bureau of Customer Support and Services toll free at 1-800-843-6154 (voice) or (866) 324-5553 TTY/Nextalk or 711 TTY Relay.



How often will IDHS review my case?

If you are a responsible relative, the amount of money you have to pay to help take care of your relative will be reviewed and may change each year.

You may also ask IDHS to review the amount of money you have to pay any time your income or family situation changes. For more information about what to do when you want your case reviewed, ask your caseworker or call the Bureau of Customer Support and Services toll free at 1-800-843-6154 (voice) or (866) 324-5553 TTY/Nextalk or 711 TTY Relay.