



Washington State  
Institute for  
Public Policy

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***CHILD SUPPORT PATTERNS***  
***IN WASHINGTON STATE: 1993–1994***

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## Executive Summary

In 1990 the Washington Legislature responded to the requirements of the federal 1988 Family Policy Act and created a presumptive statewide schedule for child support determination. In 1993, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy was asked by legislative leaders to analyze patterns of actual child support orders, to compare the state's support schedule with other states, and to compare the guidelines to the cost of raising children.

To conduct this research, the Institute relied on a sample of child support summary reports, which are completed in county superior courts when child support decisions are made. The time period for the reports in the sample was between June 1993 and May 1994.

The findings can be organized around four central questions:

### **1. What proportion of parental income is ordered to be spent on child support?**

When looking at the combined net income of the parents in the study group, the median level of court-ordered support for one-child families is 21 percent; for two-children families it is 30 percent, and for three-children families, it is 37 percent.

### **2. How frequently do the courts deviate from the statewide guidelines?**

The courts deviated from the presumptive guidelines in 54 percent of the cases examined in this study. In 47 percent of the cases, courts lowered the amount from the standard level, they raised the amount in 7 percent of the cases, and they made no changes from the standard level in 46 percent of the cases.

### **3. How do child support orders in Washington compare to the costs of raising children?**

No consensus has emerged nationally on the precise costs of raising children. The economic studies in this area typically describe the costs as a share of parental income. While a specific dollar value has not been uniformly accepted in the national cost literature, there is consensus that these studies, taken as a whole, form a low-to-high range for these costs. The median level of Washington's child support orders falls within this range.

### **4. How do Washington's guidelines compare to other states?**

No study of actual child support levels has compared all fifty states. One study compared the guidelines in all states, but it did not include the deviations courts make from the guidelines. The study focused on three case examples. For the first two examples, which reflect lower and middle parental income levels, Washington's guidelines were high in comparison to other states. For the higher income case, Washington's guidelines were in the middle of the distribution of states.

# Introduction

## Background:<sup>1</sup>

House Bill 2888, passed in the 1990 session of the Washington Legislature, created a presumptive schedule for child support awards in Washington State. That legislation also directed the Washington Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC) to create a form summarizing the amount and calculation of child support awards. When a decree or modification is entered, these *Child Support Order Summary Reports* must be filed with the county clerk and forwarded to OAC (*see the Appendix for a copy of this form*). These Child Support Order Summary Reports are collected and maintained, but are **not** regularly entered on a data base. Although limited in scope, this information is the **only** data source for child support orders in Washington State during a given time period.

In 1991, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy published an economic analysis of a representative cross-section of these Child Support Summary Reports.<sup>2</sup>

The chairs of the Judiciary Committee of the Washington House of Representatives and the Law and Justice Committee of the Washington Senate, in 1993, asked the Washington State Institute for Public Policy:

- to analyze patterns of child support orders in Washington State for the most recent year feasible,
- to compare, if feasible, information about Washington's child support schedule with similar information from other states, and
- to provide information about the cost of raising children relevant to an assessment of Washington's presumptive child support schedule.

## Study Methods:

Data for this study were drawn from the approximately 18,000 Child Support Summary Reports received at the OAC between June 1993 and May 1994. From these 18,000 forms, a random sample of 7,934 forms was drawn and entered on a computerized data base. Further analysis of this sample showed that:

- 3,044 were support orders coded by the courts as paternity cases and were assumed to be public assistance cases. The cause number stamped on the form by court clerks indicates paternity cases. We analyzed these orders and found that their average monthly family income, family size, and child support order

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<sup>1</sup> Draft reports, based on preliminary analyses of data, were presented to the Washington House Judiciary and Senate Law and Justice Committees in September 1994 and to the House and Senate Law and Justice Committees in January 1995. This final report benefits from an extensive review of all preliminary findings and a more thorough analysis of the data.

<sup>2</sup> See Kate J. Stirling, "The Economic Consequences of Child Support in Washington State" (Olympia, Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 1991).



amounts verified this assumption that these cases were substantially different from non-paternity cases.

- 2,868 were support orders where it was not clear whether it was or was not a paternity case.
- **2,022** were support orders coded by the courts as non-paternity cases. These cases represent those families getting divorces in 1993-94 or modifications of earlier support orders, where either the father or the mother was listed as the payor of the child support order.

This study uses the third category of support orders (numbering 2,022), *where either the father or the mother were ordered to pay child support*, and that were coded by the court as non-paternity cases. Using paternity cases or those cases where paternity may have been an issue, would have skewed both family income and the child support order amounts **downward**. The purpose of this study is to analyze child support patterns for court orders of divorces and modifications in 1993-94, not the special cases of paternity establishment.

### **What This Study Is:**

This study describes child support order patterns at a point in time, that is 1993-94, in Washington State. This study is descriptive, and offers no conclusions or recommendations. **Five** major areas of information are provided:

1. What proportion of combined parental income is ordered for child support?
2. How frequently do the courts deviate from the statewide presumptive guidelines?
3. What are the patterns of child support orders from one parent to another?
4. How do Washington's court-ordered child support levels compare to the cost of raising children?
5. How do Washington's guidelines compare with other states?

Data collected, coded and analyzed from Washington's Child Support Summary Reports provided the basis for some of this analysis. This information, however, is quite limited in scope and breadth. It allows for descriptions of income, child support order amounts, deviations, and other limited information. Other information on patterns from other states and on the cost of raising children was collected from published research.

## **What This Study is NOT:**

This study is **not** a study of all divorced families in Washington State. Instead, it includes a cross-section view of child support orders and modifications of orders filed during a one-year period (1993-94).

A comprehensive picture of all divorced families in Washington State, together with the impact of changing child support awards, child support payments, and deviations in both awards and payments, could only be gained from tracking a sample of such families over several years. Such a picture is beyond the resources available for this study.

# I. Court-Ordered Child Support Levels in Washington

## How are court-ordered child support levels set in Washington?

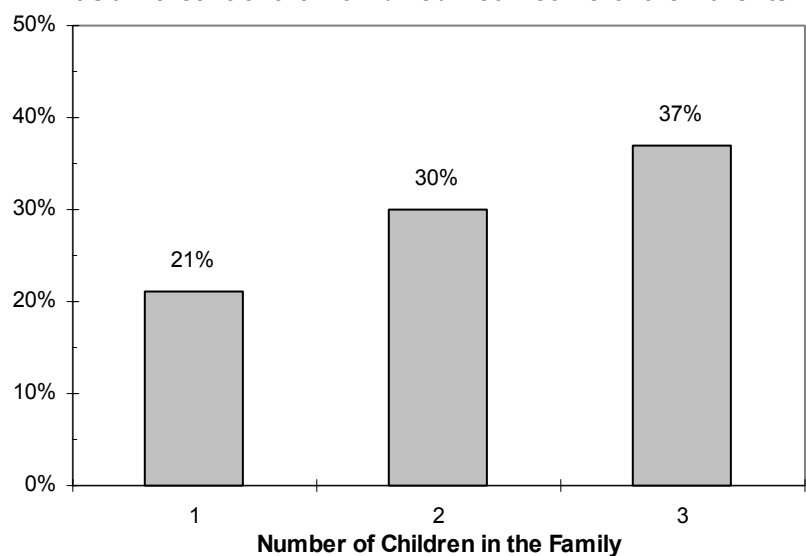
As established in RCW 26.19, courts in Washington use a “combined monthly net income” approach in setting child support levels. Using a worksheet developed by the Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC), the *after-tax* incomes of *both* the father and the mother are listed for the court. Based on the combined net income of the parents and on the number and age of the children, a court then determines the *basic child support obligation* from Washington’s “Child Support Economic Table.”<sup>3</sup> A court can then modify this basic obligation reflecting extraordinary health care expenses, day care expenses, education expenses, long distance transportation expenses, and other special expenses.<sup>4</sup> The result of these calculations is the *standard child support obligation* of the parents, which is allocated to each parent in proportion to his or her share of total combined net income. Courts can then “deviate” from this standard calculation on a case-by-case basis.

## What percent of monthly combined parental net income goes for court-ordered child support in Washington?

The percent varies depending on the size of the family, among other factors. The study results show that in 1993-94 for a family with one child, the median level of court-ordered child support is 21 percent of combined net family income. This means that half of the families with one child have support levels below 21 percent of net family income while half of the families with one child have a greater level of court-ordered child support. This figure reflects the *combined* parental support for the child. It counts both the court-ordered transfer by the non-custodial parent to the custodial parent, as well as the court-determined support obligation of the custodial parent.

For a family with two children, the study shows that the median support level is 30 percent. For three children, the median support level is 37 percent. Figure 1 shows these court-ordered support levels for different family sizes.

**Figure 1**  
**Median Level of Court-Ordered Child Support**  
**as a Percent of the Combined Net Income of the Parents**



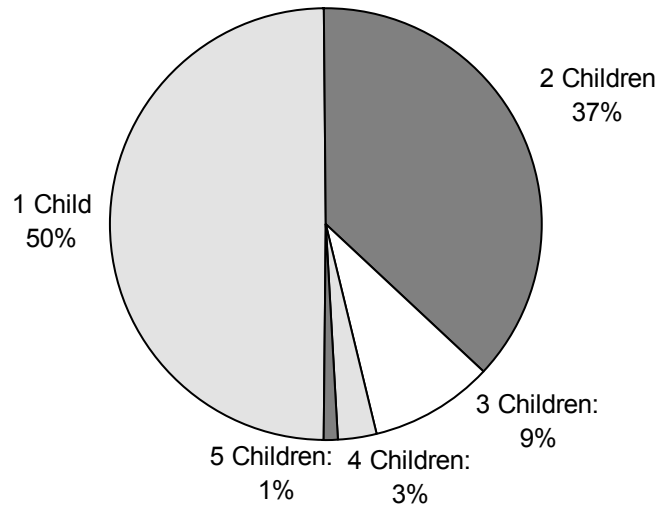
<sup>3</sup>RCW 26.19.020. (Also, see Appendix).

<sup>4</sup>RCW 26.19.080.

## How many children are in the average family with court-ordered child support?

The study results show that families in 1993-94 with court-ordered child support had, on average, **1.7 children**. Of all the families in the study, 50 percent had one child; 37 percent had two children; 9 percent had three children; 3 percent had four children; and 1 percent had 5 children. Figure 2 shows this distribution graphically.

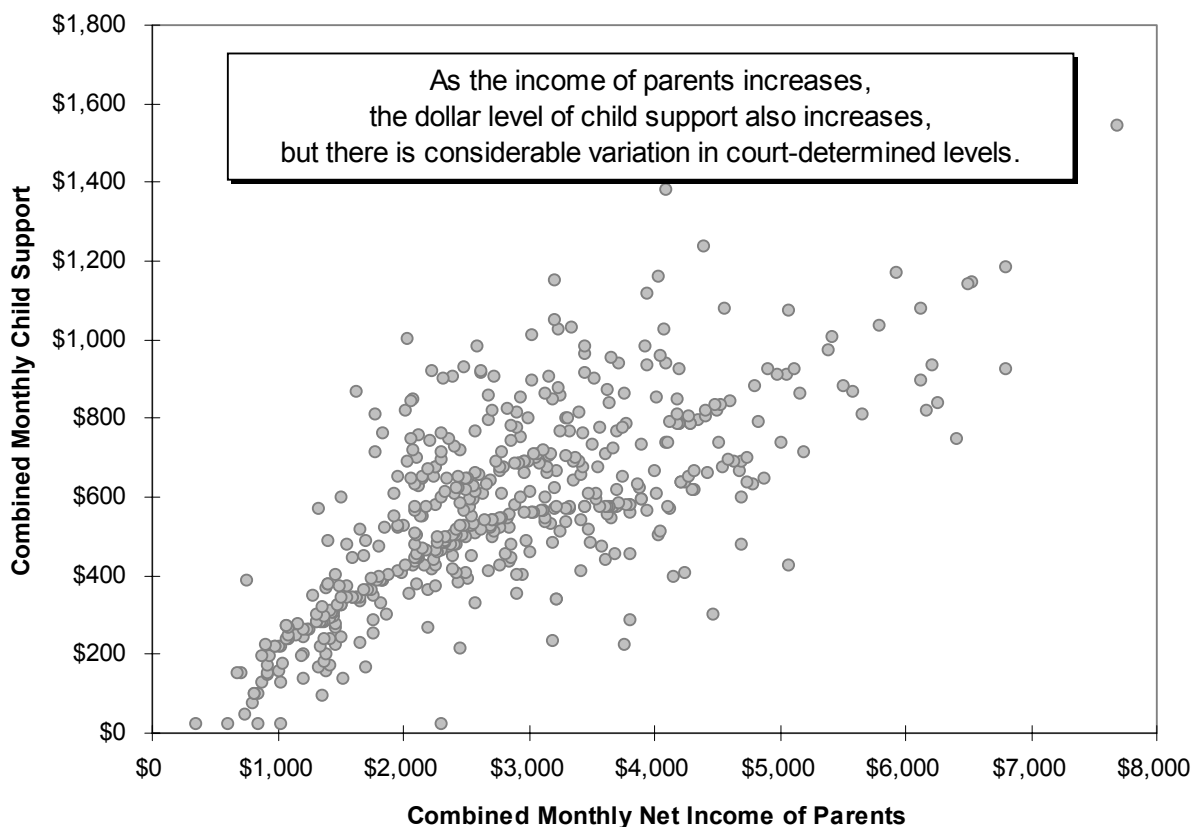
**Figure 2**  
**The Number of Children in Families**  
**With Court-Ordered Child Support in Washington**  
Percent of Child Support Cases



## Do the Dollar Amounts of Court-Ordered Child Support Increase as the Incomes of the Parents Increase?

**Yes.** Washington's Child Support Guidelines provide for a larger monthly level of child support as the parents' combined income increases. Figure 3 shows the data for a one-child family.<sup>5</sup> The variation in the data reflects several factors: the age of the child; differences in the amounts courts determine for extraordinary health care expenses, day care expenses, education expenses, and long distance transportation expenses; and any deviations from the standard child support schedule ordered by the court. However, parents' combined income is the major determinant of the dollar amount of the child support order.

**Figure 3**  
**The Dollar Amount of Monthly Court-Ordered Child Support**  
**by the Income of the Parents of One-Child Families**

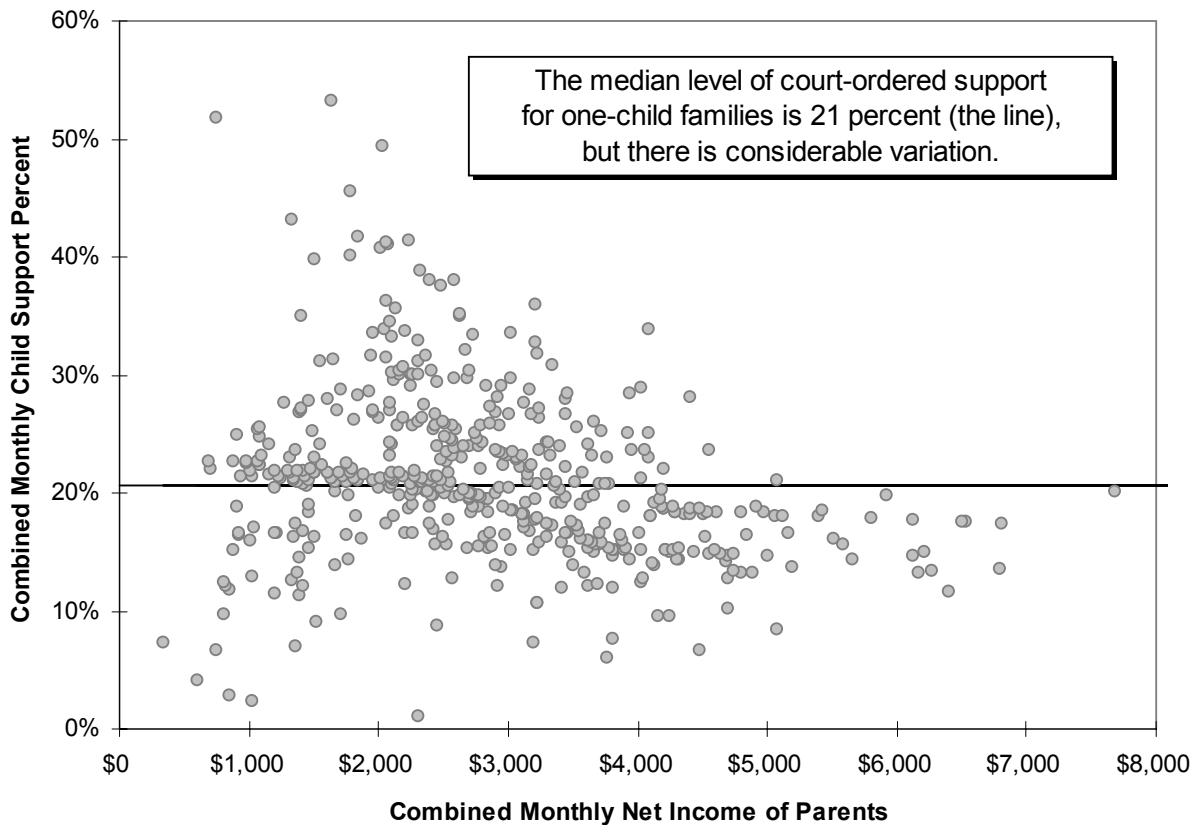


<sup>5</sup>Figures 3 and 4 plot the data for one-child families. Since the number of children in the family is one of the main factors determining the level of child support, it is easier to discern the effects of income on child support levels for a particular family size, rather than mixing data on different family sizes. One-child families were chosen because they are the most numerous; 50 percent of all child support families have just one child.

## Does the Proportion of Income Ordered for Child Support Increase as the Income of the Parents Increase?

**No.** The data can also be expressed as a percent of the parents' income, rather than as the dollar amount of monthly child support. For a one-child family, the median level of court-ordered child support is 21 percent of combined net family income. The line on Figure 4 shows this 21 percent median figure. The chart also shows a considerable variation in the percent of family income that a court orders for child support. As mentioned above, the reasons for the variation include the different amounts calculated for extraordinary expenses as well as any other deviations from the standard child support schedule ordered by the court.

**Figure 4**  
**The Level of Monthly Court-Ordered Child Support**  
**as a Percent of the Income of the Parents of One-Child Families**

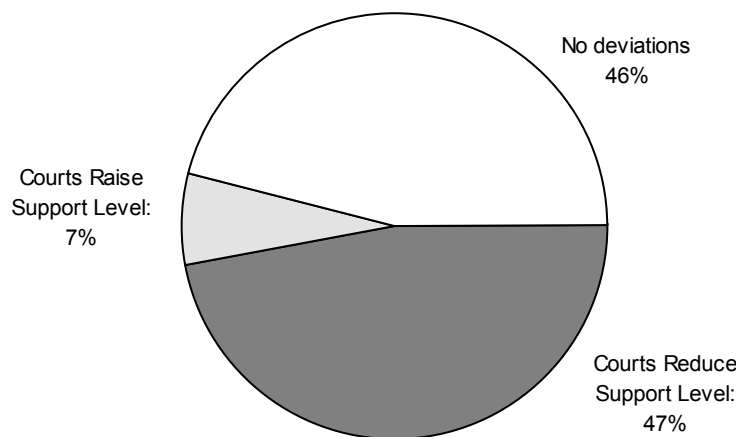


## II. Court-Ordered Deviations from Washington’s Guidelines

**Based on the study of child support orders in Washington for 1993-94, how often do courts deviate from Washington’s standard child support guideline? And by how much?**

From the study results, in about **47** percent of the child support cases in Washington, a court lowers the child support level from the standard amount in the state guidelines; in **7** percent of the cases, a court raises the amount indicated in the state guidelines; and in the remaining **46** percent of the cases, courts do not deviate from the standard calculation in the state guidelines. Figure 5 shows this distribution graphically. Thus in about **54 percent** of the cases examined in this study, courts deviated from the presumptive standards in Washington.<sup>6</sup>

**Figure 5**  
**Court-Ordered Deviations from the**  
**State Child Support Guidelines**  
**Percent of Child Support Cases**



Of the cases where a court deviated from the standard calculation by lowering the obligation, the median reduction was \$129 per month. In those cases where a court increased the standard calculation, the median increase was \$58 per month.

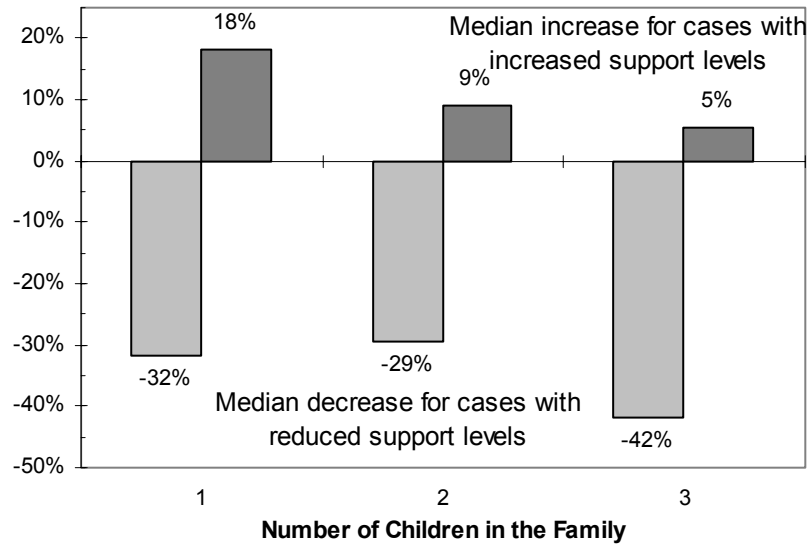
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<sup>6</sup>The deviations discussed in this section cover all instances when a court ordered a different amount from the standard child support guideline. Defined this way, there is the possibility that courts deviate from the standard amount just to “round” the calculated amount to the nearest whole dollar level. In this case, a “deviation” would not be for a substantial reason, but just for the convenience of ordering a rounded number. To test for this, a dollar band around the amount of the deviation was used in the study. For example, if a \$10 a month band around the deviations is allowed for rounding, then the number of reported “deviations” in the study drops, but only slightly. In the \$10 case, the percent of court orders involving a deviation drops to 50 percent (from 54 percent without the \$10 “rounding” band). If the band is widened to \$25 dollars, then the number of cases with deviations drops to 47 percent.

**Based on the study, do deviations vary with the number of children in the family?**

**Yes.** The results from the study show that for a one-child family, when courts lower the standard support obligation, the median decrease for the non-custodial parent is about 32 percent. When courts increase the support obligation for a one-child family, the median increase is about 18 percent. Figure 6 shows these results along with data for two- and three-child families. The most significant finding is that courts have tended to lower support obligations more, and raise support obligations less, for three-child families than for one- or two-child families.

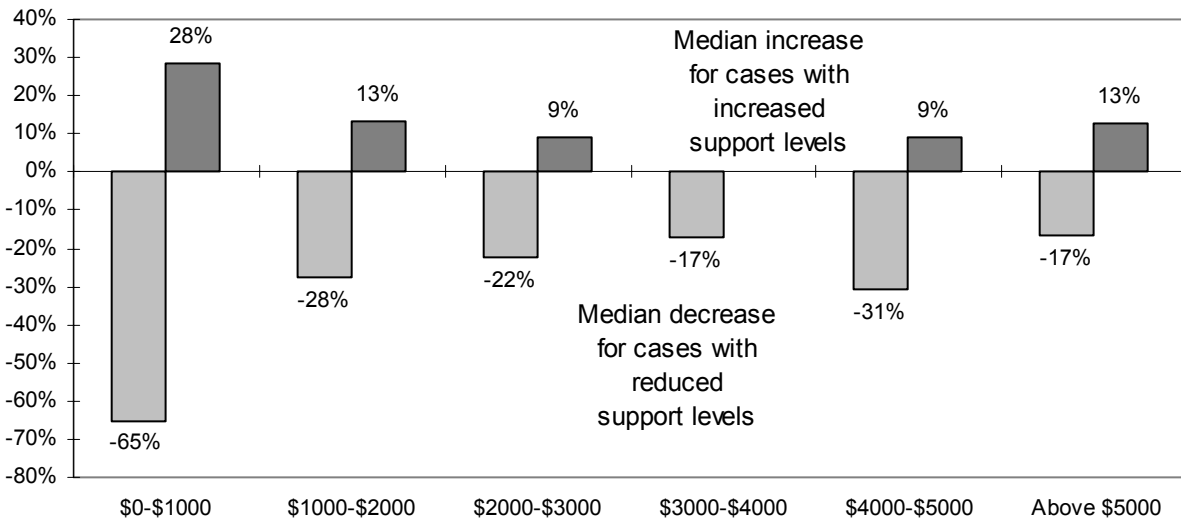
**Figure 6**  
**Court-Ordered Deviations from State Guidelines**  
**Percentage Deviation by Family Size**



**Do the court-ordered deviations vary with the amount of income of the non-custodial parent?**

**Yes.** The results from the study show that when courts have lowered the non-custodial parent’s standard obligation, they have done so by a median 65 percent for those cases

**Figure 7**  
**Court-Ordered Deviations from State Guidelines**  
**Percentage Deviation by the Income of the Non-Custodial Parent**





where the non-custodial parent's income level is between \$0 and \$1,000 per month. It is also in the lowest income groups that the largest percent increases occurred for those cases where courts ordered an upward deviation from the standard calculation. Figure 7 shows these results along with the median percentage deviations for different income groupings. For several of these income groupings, the sample size is small and the percentages reported here should be viewed cautiously. The most significant finding is the large downward deviation for the lowest income group.

### **Do deviations vary depending on whether the court order is an original court order or a modification to an existing order?**

**No.** In the sample of cases used in this study, about 68 percent were original court orders and the other 32 percent were modifications to existing court orders. For the **original orders**, courts deviated from the standard support guidelines about 52 percent of the time. For the court actions **modifying** the original orders, courts deviated from the standard support guidelines an almost identical 53 percent of the time. Thus the decision of a court to deviate from the standard support calculation in the state guidelines seems to have little to do with whether the order is an original order or a modification decision.

### **Are deviations from the State Guidelines more likely to occur when a superior court judge makes the decision, or when an administrative law judge decides?**

From the data in the study, it appears that very few of the cases are decided by administrative law judges. Superior court judges decided 99 percent of the cases in the sample and deviated from the State guidelines 53 percent of the time. In the 1 percent of the cases decided by administrative law judges, deviations occurred in 56 percent of the orders.

### **Do the courts give reasons when deviations are made from the State Guidelines?**

In 38 percent of the cases reviewed in this study, no reasons for deviating from the State Guidelines were recorded on the Child Support Summary Report. It is not known whether this was because no reason was given in the actual order, or whether the reasons were just not reported on the Summary Report. Of those cases where courts listed reasons for deviations on the Summary Reports, 91 percent of time the deviation was related to parental factors, as opposed to the needs of the children. Particular reasons listed for the deviations include: other children to support, agreement between the parties, time spent with children, and low or high income of the parents.

## **How do deviations in Washington compare to deviations in other states?**

There is a lack of consistent information to answer this question. The U.S. Office of Child Support Enforcement will be conducting an analysis of deviations in ten states (including Washington). This study is scheduled for completion by September 30, 1995.<sup>7</sup> Part of the difficulty in comparing states is the lack of a consistent way of defining what a “deviation” is among the states. For example, in Washington, a judge can modify the amount of child support in the state’s economic table by adding support for day care expenses. This modification, allowed under RCW 26.19.080, is not considered a deviation from the Washington’s Guideline. In 26 other states, however, day care expenses are listed as reasons for “deviating” from the guidelines.<sup>8</sup>

## **Are there awards for post-secondary education in the original court orders, or in the subsequent modifications to the original orders?**

Provisions for post-secondary education occurred in 24 percent of the original court orders and in 21 percent of orders modifying the original orders. Actual dollar awards for post-secondary education, on the other hand, were provided for in about 2 percent of the original orders, and in about 7 percent of the modifying orders.

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<sup>7</sup>Telephone conversation with Robert Bleimann, a contractor to the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, February 13, 1995.

<sup>8</sup>See U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (1994), *Child Support Guidelines: The Next Generation*, pp86-87.

### **III. Court-Ordered Child Support Obligations from One Parent to Another**

#### **What percent of monthly net income is a divorced father or mother ordered to pay in child support?**

The results of the study show that when fathers are ordered by courts to pay child support, they are ordered to pay 23 percent of their median net income. This means that half of the orders for fathers are below 23 percent of the fathers' net income and half are above. When mothers are ordered to pay, the median amount is 17 percent of mothers' net income. Table 1 shows these numbers along with data on how the court-ordered obligations vary for the father and the mother depending on the income of the parent ordered to pay, and on the number of children in the family.

The last section of Table 1 shows data on the median dollar amounts of the court-ordered payments. When fathers are ordered to pay, the median monthly payment is \$421; when mothers are ordered to pay, the median amount is \$116. Part of the reason for the difference in these two numbers relates to the *relative* income levels of fathers and mothers. From the sample data, in those cases where fathers are ordered to pay child support, the median net income of fathers is \$1,717 while the net income of custodial mothers is \$1,000. In those cases where mothers are ordered to pay child support, the median net income of mothers is \$1,025 while the net income of custodial fathers is \$1,797. Thus in both situations the fathers' share of total combined family income is about 63 percent. Since the Washington Child Support Guidelines allocate the total amount of support to each parent based on his or her share of total income, then fathers will typically pay more because they tend to have more income—either when they are the proposed payors or when they are the proposed payees.

It needs to be stressed that the number of cases in the sample used in this study is very small for some of these sub-classifications, especially for those cases where the mother is ordered to pay child support. Conclusions should be very tentative when the sample sizes are small.

**Table 1**  
**Court-Ordered Child Support Payments**  
**From One Parent to Another**

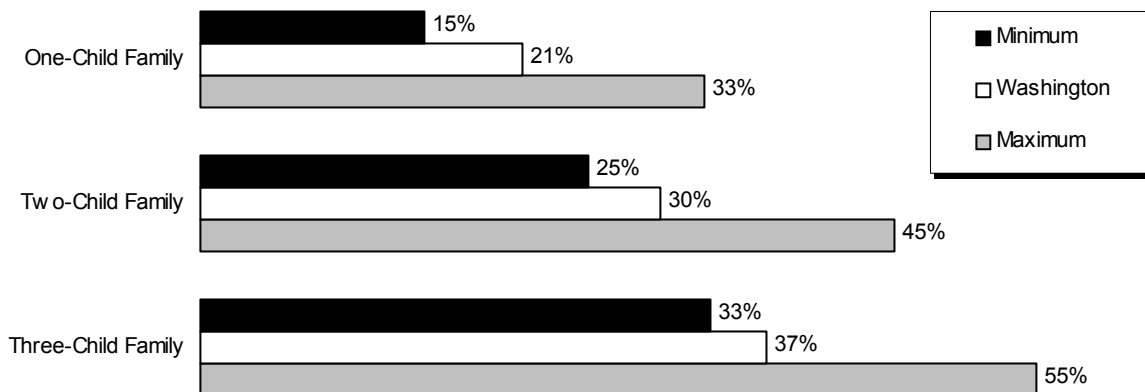
	When the Parent Ordered to Pay is the...	
	...Father	...Mother
Court Order as Percent of Monthly Net Income		
Median from Sample	23%	17%
Maximum from Sample	93%	75%
Minimum from Sample	0%	0%
Court Order as Median Percent of Monthly Net Income		
By the Income Level of the Parent Ordered to Pay		
Less Than \$1,500	23%	16%
\$1,500 to \$2,499	25%	17%
\$2,500 to \$3,499	21%	21%
More Than \$3,500	20%	18%
Court Order as Median Percent of Monthly Net Income		
By the Number of Kids in the Family		
One Child	21%	15%
Two Children	29%	19%
Three Children	37%	16%
Four Children	37%	21%
Monthly Dollar Amount of the Court-Ordered Payment		
Median from Sample	\$421	\$116
Maximum from Sample	\$2,000	\$825
Minimum from Sample	\$0	\$0

## IV. Comparison of Washington’s Court-ordered Child Support Levels with Research on the Cost of Raising Children

Various studies of child-raising costs have been conducted nationally. These studies analyze costs in terms of a percent share of family income. There is little consensus regarding the percent share needed for child-raising costs. Rather, the theoretical literature seems to conclude that the studies, taken as a group, form a high-to-low range of what it costs to raise children.<sup>9</sup>

Based on the literature and the results from this study, Washington’s child support guidelines—and the deviations courts make from them—put median court-ordered child support levels in Washington within the high-to-low range of cost estimates of raising children. Figure 8 below, and Table 2 on the next page, show the results of the various cost studies along with Washington’s median child support levels from the study. For a one-child family, the estimated theoretical costs of raising a child range from 15 percent to 33 percent of family net income—Washington’s actual median support level is 21 percent for a one-child family. For a two-child family, the theoretical costs range from 25 percent to 45 percent—Washington’s actual level is 30 percent. For a three-child family, the estimated child-raising costs range from 33 percent to 55 percent—Washington’s actual median child support level is 37 percent.

**Figure 8**  
**National Estimates of Child-Raising Costs and**  
**Median Washington Court-Ordered Child Support Levels**  
(Child-Raising Costs as a Percent of Net Income By Family Size)



<sup>9</sup>See U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (1994), *Child Support Guidelines: The Next Generation*, p22. See also Andrea H. Beller and John W. Graham, (1993), *Small Change: the Economics of Child Support*, Yale University Press, p204.

**Table 2**  
**National Estimates of Child Raising Costs and**  
**Median Washington Court-Ordered Child Support Levels**  
 Child Cost as a Percent of Net Income By Family Size(1)

Study by Author	Number of Children in Family		
	One	Two	Three
Betson I (2)(4)	31%	45%	55%
Betson II (2)	24%	33%	36%
Espenshade (2)	27%	43%	53%
Lazear & Michael I (2)	17%	28%	37%
Turchi (2)	n/a	29%	n/a
Olson (2)	24%	40%	53%
USDA (2)	28%	45%	53%
Lazear & Michael II (3)(4)	15%	25%	33%
Betson III (5)	33%	45%	51%
Maximum of Listed Studies	33%	45%	55%
Minimum of Listed Studies	15%	25%	33%
<b>Median Court-Ordered Child Support Levels in Washington (see § I of this report)</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>37%</b>

Notes

- (1) All values for the listed national studies have been converted from gross to net income figures by using .75 to account for income and payroll taxes.  
 (2) As reported in Andrea H. Beller and John W. Graham, (1993), *Small Change: the Economics of Child Support*, Yale University Press, Table 6.11, page 206.  
 (3) As reported in Laurie J. Bassi and Burt S. Barnow, (1993), "Expenditures on Children and Child Support Guidelines," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, v12 n3, Table 1, page 485.  
 (4) As reported in U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (1994), *Child Support Guidelines: The Next Generation*, p23.  
 (5) Calculated from the results in David Betson et al., (1992), "Trade-Offs Implicit in Child-Support Guidelines," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, v11, n1, Table 2, page 8.

Table 3 shows the percent of child support cases in Washington that lie above, within, or below the high-to-low range of national studies on the cost of raising a child. For a one-child family, 6 percent of the cases looked at in this study had child-support levels above the national range, 78 percent were within the national cost range, and 16 percent were below the national range. For three-child families, 35 percent of the cases had child-support levels below the national range while 61 percent were within the range.

**Table 3**  
**The Percent of Washington Child-Support Orders**  
**Above, Within, or Below the National Child-Raising Cost Range**

	Number of Children in Family		
	One	Two	Three
Above the National Cost Range	6%	6%	4%
Within the National Cost Range	78%	68%	61%
Below the National Cost Range	16%	27%	35%

## V. Comparison of Washington's Guidelines with Other States

### How do Washington's child support levels compare to those in other states?

No study of *actual* child support levels has been done comparing all fifty states. Under the federal Family Support Act of 1988, each state is required to establish presumptive statewide guidelines. Courts can then “deviate” from these state guidelines on a case by case basis. To date, no study has compared the actual, post-deviation, support amounts in the states. As mentioned earlier in this report, the U.S. Office of Child Support Enforcement will be conducting an analysis of deviations in ten states (including Washington). This study is scheduled for completion by September 30, 1995.<sup>10</sup>

One study, done at Indiana University, has compared the child support *guidelines* in all fifty states.<sup>11</sup> That study, because it only looks at state guidelines, does not take into account the deviations that courts make from the guidelines. As discussed elsewhere in this report, courts in Washington have often lowered the amounts prescribed in this state's guidelines.

With this limitation in mind, the results of the Indiana University study are shown on Table 4. The study compares the amount of money that each state's guidelines indicate a non-custodial parent (assumed in the study to be a father) should pay to a custodial parent (assumed to be the mother). The chart plots the range of results for all 50 states. The data for Washington are highlighted. The study provides three cases:

- **CASE A.** For a father with a gross income of \$720 per month, a mother with gross income of \$480, and two children, the state guidelines in the 50 states would suggest support payments by the father ranging from \$15 per month (in Montana) to \$327 (in Indiana). The average figure for the United States for this case is \$202 while for Washington the figure is \$287.
- **CASE B.** When the father's income is \$1,500 a month, the mother's income is \$1,000, and again with a two-child family, the monthly support payments range from \$253 (in West Virginia) to \$516 (in Connecticut). The U.S. average is \$394 while Washington's guidelines suggest \$501.
- **CASE C.** Finally, when the father's gross income is \$2,640 per month and the mother's income is \$1,760, the range in monthly support payments is from \$391 (in West Virginia) to \$851 (in Connecticut). The U.S. average is \$605 while Washington's guidelines indicate \$639.

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<sup>10</sup>Telephone conversation with Robert Bleimann, a contractor to the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, February 13, 1995.

<sup>11</sup>Pirog-Good, Maureen A., and Mullins, Daniel R., “Legislated Inequalities: 1993 Child Support Guidelines,” draft paper obtained from the author.

**Table 4**  
**State Rankings from a Survey of 1993 State Child Support Guidelines**

**Monthly Child Support Awards (Dollars) Yielded by State Guidelines for Three Cases**  
**(The numbers do not include court-ordered deviations from the State Guidelines)**

<b>Case A*</b>		<b>Case B*</b>		<b>Case C*</b>	
Father's Gross Income:	\$720	Father's Gross Income:	\$1,500	Father's Gross Income:	\$2,640
Mother's Gross Income:	<u>\$480</u>	Mother's Gross Income:	<u>\$1,000</u>	Mother's Gross Income:	<u>\$1,760</u>
Combined Gross Income:	\$1,200	Combined Gross Income:	\$2,500	Combined Gross Income:	\$4,400
Indiana	\$327	Connecticut	\$516	Connecticut	\$851
Rhode Island	\$315	<b>Washington</b>	<b>\$501</b>	Massachusetts	\$776
Maryland	\$295	Indiana	\$485	California	\$740
Kentucky	\$293	Rhode Island	\$480	Florida	\$709
Missouri	\$293	California	\$467	New Jersey	\$702
Virginia	\$289	Florida	\$460	New York	\$700
<b>Washington</b>	<b>\$287</b>	Massachusetts	\$458	Vermont	\$696
Maine	\$286	Arizona	\$453	Indiana	\$687
Arizona	\$284	Maryland	\$449	Rhode Island	\$677
New Mexico	\$283	Kentucky	\$448	Georgia	\$673
North Carolina	\$272	New Jersey	\$446	Nevada	\$660
Ohio	\$266	Virginia	\$443	Wisconsin	\$660
Louisiana	\$265	Missouri	\$440	Arizona	\$658
Florida	\$262	Vermont	\$439	New Hampshire	\$656
California	\$261	New York	\$436	Maryland	\$655
Alabama	\$260	Michigan	\$433	Tennessee	\$654
Colorado	\$260	New Mexico	\$433	Idaho	\$647
New Jersey	\$259	North Carolina	\$432	Louisiana	\$645
Oklahoma	\$258	Louisiana	\$426	Virginia	\$641
South Carolina	\$256	Maine	\$425	Kentucky	\$640
Pennsylvania	\$254	Idaho	\$424	<b>Washington</b>	<b>\$639</b>
Idaho	\$245	Alabama	\$417	North Carolina	\$638
Kansas	\$225	Ohio	\$417	Alabama	\$622
Tennessee	\$197	Pennsylvania	\$415	Missouri	\$620
Iowa	\$187	New Hampshire	\$412	Wyoming	\$620
Georgia	\$184	Hawaii	\$410	Michigan	\$616
Nevada	\$180	Colorado	\$409	New Mexico	\$612
Wisconsin	\$180	Kansas	\$406	Maine	\$611
Minnesota	\$170	South Carolina	\$400	Colorado	\$610
Oregon	\$165	Delaware	\$397	Kansas	\$609
Michigan	\$162	Tennessee	\$391	Ohio	\$601
West Virginia	\$155	Oklahoma	\$385	Oregon	\$590
Utah	\$153	Georgia	\$383	South Carolina	\$589
Arkansas	\$150	Nevada	\$375	Delaware	\$587
Texas	\$147	Wisconsin	\$375	Hawaii	\$570
New Hampshire	\$140	Iowa	\$355	Minnesota	\$556
Mississippi	\$138	Nebraska	\$333	Iowa	\$554
Alaska	\$137	Minnesota	\$330	North Dakota	\$554
Illinois	\$136	North Dakota	\$328	Pennsylvania	\$553
Wyoming	\$133	South Dakota	\$328	Alaska	\$526
South Dakota	\$128	Oregon	\$327	Mississippi	\$522
North Dakota	\$126	Wyoming	\$324	South Dakota	\$515
Delaware	\$100	Arkansas	\$305	Texas	\$510
Hawaii	\$60	Alaska	\$300	Nebraska	\$507
Nebraska	\$54	Texas	\$295	Oklahoma	\$505
New York	\$25	Mississippi	\$294	Illinois	\$477
Montana	\$15	Montana	\$288	Arkansas	\$475
Connecticut	N/A	Illinois	\$281	Montana	\$451
Massachusetts	N/A	Utah	\$264	Utah	\$442
Vermont	N/A	West Virginia	\$253	West Virginia	\$391

Source: Pirog-Good, Maureen A., Daniel R. Mullins, "Legislated Inequalities: 1993 Child Support Guidelines," Draft paper.

\* In addition to the income assumptions, each case assumes a two-child family with ages 7 and 13; the Father pays union dues of \$30 per month; the children's monthly health care expenses total \$25; and monthly child care expenses of \$150.



# Appendix

- **Child Support Order Summary Report.....20**
- **Washington State Child Support Schedule—Economic Table .....21**
- **Washington State Child Support Schedule—Work Sheets .....22**

# CHILD SUPPORT ORDER SUMMARY REPORT

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cause Number \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Order \_\_\_\_\_

Summary Report Filed By: Father ( ) Mother ( )

1. Type of Order (check one): \_\_\_\_\_ Superior Court \_\_\_\_\_ Administrative Law Judge
2. Was the order for child support (check one): \_\_\_\_\_ original order for support \_\_\_\_\_ order modifying support
3. Number of children of the parties: \_\_\_\_\_
4. List each child's age below:  
Child 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Child 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Child 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Child 4 \_\_\_\_\_

Complete lines 5-13 using the amounts entered on the child support worksheets signed by the judge/reviewing officer.

5. Father's monthly net income (Support Worksheet page 1, Line 3) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
6. Mother's monthly net income (Support Worksheet page 1, Line 3) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
7. List the basic child support obligation for each child (from Worksheet page 1, Line 5, individual amounts)  
Child 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Child 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Child 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Child 4 \_\_\_\_\_
8. Health Care Expenses (Support Worksheet page 1, Line 8f) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
9. Day Care and Special Expenses (Support Worksheet page 2, Line 9)
  - a. Day Care Expenses \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Education Expenses \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Long Distance Transportation Expenses \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Other \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Other \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_
10. a. Father's standard calculation support obligation (Support Worksheet page 2, Line 13) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
b. Mother's standard calculation support obligation (Support Worksheet page 2, Line 13) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Actual Transfer Payment Ordered and Deviation (If any)

11. Which Parent is Payor? Father ( ) Mother ( )
12. Transfer Payment Amount Ordered By Court \$ \_\_\_\_\_
13. a. If the Court deviated (amount from Line 12 differs from amount on Line 10 for the payor), was the deviation due to: Child Needs ( ) Parental Factors ( )  
b. If the Court deviated, what were the reasons stated by the Court for the deviation?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 
14. a. Was post-secondary education provided for? Yes ( ) No ( )  
b. If provided for, was a dollar amount ordered? Yes ( ) No ( )  
c. If a dollar amount was ordered, enter Payor's amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Answer remaining questions only if this was an order modifying support.

15. Total amount of the support transfer payment on the previous order? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
16. Which parent paid the transfer payment in the previous order? Father ( ) Mother ( )
17. Was the change in the support transfer payment, if any, phased in? Yes ( ) No ( )
18. The change in the support order was due to: (check all applicable categories) Change in residential schedules ( )  
Change in parent income ( ) Age of children ( ) Change in support schedule ( ) Other ( )

# Washington State Child Support Schedule Economic Table

## Monthly Basic Support Obligation Per Child

(KEY: A = AGE 0-11 B = AGE 12-18)

Combined Monthly Net Income	One Child Family		Two Children Family		Three Children Family		Four Children Family		Five Children Family	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
For income less than \$600, refer to Standards for Establishing Lower and Upper Limits on Child Support Amounts, #2: Income below six hundred dollars. (See page 2)										
600	123	164	103	127	86	106	73	90	63	78
700	155	191	120	148	100	124	85	105	74	91
800	177	218	137	170	115	142	97	120	84	104
900	199	246	154	191	129	159	109	135	95	118
1000	220	272	171	211	143	177	121	149	105	130
1100	242	299	188	232	157	194	133	164	116	143
1200	264	326	205	253	171	211	144	179	126	156
1300	285	352	221	274	185	228	156	193	136	168
1400	307	379	238	294	199	246	168	208	147	181
1500	327	404	254	313	212	262	179	221	156	193
1600	347	428	269	333	225	278	190	235	166	205
1700	367	453	285	352	238	294	201	248	175	217
1800	387	478	300	371	251	310	212	262	185	228
1900	407	503	316	390	264	326	223	275	194	240
2000	427	527	331	409	277	342	234	289	204	252
2100	447	552	347	429	289	358	245	303	213	264
2200	467	577	362	448	302	374	256	316	223	276
2300	487	601	378	467	315	390	267	330	233	288
2400	506	626	393	486	328	406	278	343	242	299
2500	526	650	408	505	341	421	288	356	251	311
2600	534	661	416	513	346	428	293	362	256	316
2700	542	670	421	520	351	435	298	368	259	321
2800	549	679	427	527	356	440	301	372	262	324
2900	556	686	431	533	360	445	305	376	266	328
3000	561	693	436	538	364	449	308	380	268	331
3100	566	699	439	543	367	453	310	383	270	334
3200	569	704	442	546	369	457	312	386	272	336
3300	573	708	445	549	371	459	314	388	273	339
3400	574	710	446	551	372	460	315	389	274	340
3500	575	711	447	552	373	461	316	390	275	341
3600	577	712	448	553	374	462	317	391	276	342
3700	578	713	449	554	375	463	318	392	277	343
3800	581	719	452	558	377	466	319	394	278	344
3900	596	736	463	572	386	477	326	404	284	352
4000	609	753	473	584	395	488	334	413	291	360
4100	623	770	484	598	404	500	341	422	298	368
4200	638	788	495	611	413	511	350	431	305	377
4300	651	805	506	625	422	522	357	441	311	385
4400	664	821	516	637	431	532	364	449	317	392
4500	677	836	525	649	438	542	371	458	323	400
4600	689	851	535	661	446	552	377	467	329	407
4700	701	866	545	673	455	562	384	475	335	414
4800	713	882	554	685	463	572	391	483	341	422
4900	726	897	564	697	470	581	398	491	347	429
5000	738	912	574	708	479	592	404	500	353	437

For income greater than \$5,000, refer to Standards for Establishing Lower and Upper Limits on Child Support Amounts, #3: Income above five thousand and seven thousand dollars. (See page 3)

5100	751	928	584	720	487	602	411	509	359	443
5200	763	943	593	732	494	611	418	517	365	451
5300	776	959	602	744	503	621	425	525	371	458
5400	788	974	612	756	511	632	432	533	377	466
5500	800	989	622	768	518	641	439	542	383	473
5600	812	1004	632	779	527	651	446	551	389	480
5700	825	1019	641	791	535	661	452	559	395	488
5800	837	1035	650	803	543	671	459	567	401	495
5900	850	1050	660	815	551	681	466	575	407	502
6000	862	1065	670	827	559	691	473	584	413	509
6100	875	1081	680	839	567	701	479	593	418	517
6200	887	1096	689	851	575	710	486	601	424	524
6300	899	1112	699	863	583	721	493	609	430	532
6400	911	1127	709	875	591	731	500	617	436	539
6500	924	1142	718	887	599	740	506	626	442	546
6600	936	1157	728	899	607	750	513	635	448	554
6700	949	1172	737	911	615	761	520	643	454	561
6800	961	1188	747	923	623	770	527	651	460	568
6900	974	1203	757	935	631	780	533	659	466	575
7000	986	1218	767	946	639	790	540	668	472	583

For income greater than \$7,000, refer to Standards for Establishing Lower and Upper Limits on Child Support Amounts, #3: Income above five thousand and seven thousand dollars. (See page 3)

# Washington State Child Support Schedule Worksheets

Mother \_\_\_\_\_

Father \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Superior Court Case Number \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Children and Ages:</b>		
<b>Part I: Basic Child Support Obligation (See Instructions, Page 5)</b>		
	Father	Mother
<b>1. Gross Monthly Income</b>		
a. Wages and Salaries	\$	\$
b. Interest and Dividend Income	\$	\$
c. Business Income	\$	\$
d. Spousal Maintenance Received	\$	\$
e. Other Income	\$	\$
f. Total Gross Monthly Income (add lines 1a through 1e)	\$	\$
<b>2. Monthly Deductions from Gross Income</b>		
a. Income Taxes	\$	\$
b. FICA/Self-Employment Taxes	\$	\$
c. State Industrial Insurance Deductions	\$	\$
d. <i>Mandatory</i> Union/Professional Dues	\$	\$
e. Pension Plan Payments	\$	\$
f. Spousal Maintenance Paid	\$	\$
g. Normal Business Expenses	\$	\$
h. Total Deductions from Gross Income (add lines 2a through 2g)	\$	\$
<b>3. Monthly Net Income</b> (line 1f minus line 2h)	\$	\$
<b>4. Combined Monthly Net Income</b> (add father's and mother's monthly net incomes from line 3)	\$	
<b>5. Basic Child Support Obligation (enter total amount in box → )</b> Child #1 _____ Child #3 _____ Child #2 _____ Child #4 _____	\$	
<b>6. Proportional Share of Income</b> (each parent's net income from line 3 divided by line 4)		
<b>7. Each Parent's Basic Child Support Obligation</b> (multiply each number on line 6 by line 5)	\$	\$
<b>Part II: Health Care, Day Care, and Special Child Rearing Expenses (See Instructions, Page 7)</b>		
<b>8. Health Care Expenses</b>		
a. Monthly Health Insurance Premiums Paid for Child(ren)	\$	\$
b. Uninsured Monthly Health Care Expenses Paid for Child(ren)	\$	\$
c. Total Monthly Health Care Expenses (line 8a plus line 8b)	\$	\$
d. Combined Monthly Health Care Expenses (add father's and mother's totals from line 8c)	\$	
e. Maximum Ordinary Monthly Health Care (multiply line 5 times .05)	\$	
f. Extraordinary Monthly Health Care Expenses (line 8d minus line 8e, if "0" or negative, enter "0")	\$	
<b>Continue to Next Page</b>		

**Part II: Health Care, Day Care, and Special Child Rearing Expenses (cont.)**

9. Day Care and Special Child Rearing Expenses	Father	Mother
a. Day Care Expenses	\$	\$
b. Education Expenses	\$	\$
c. Long Distance Transportation Expenses	\$	\$
d. Other Special Expenses (describe)	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
e. Total Day Care and Special Expenses (add lines 9a through 9d)	\$	\$
10. Combined Monthly Total of Day Care and Special Expenses (add father's and mother's total day care and special expenses from line 9e)	\$	
11. Total Extraordinary Health Care, Day Care, and Special Expenses (line 8f plus line 10)	\$	
12. Each Parent's Obligation for Extraordinary Health Care, Day Care, and Special Expenses (multiply each number on line 6 by line 11)	\$	\$
<b>Part III: Standard Calculation Child Support Obligation</b>		
13. Standard Calculation Support Obligation (line 7 plus line 12)	\$	\$
<b>Part IV: Child Support Credits (See Instructions, Page 8)</b>		
14. Child Support Credits		
a. Monthly Health Care Expenses Credit	\$	\$
b. Day Care and Special Expenses Credit	\$	\$
c. Other Ordinary Expense Credit (describe)	\$	\$
	\$	\$
d. Total Support Credits (add lines 14a through 14c)	\$	\$
<b>Part V: Net Support Obligation/Presumptive Transfer Payment (See Instructions, Page 8)</b>		
15. Net Support Obligation (line 13 minus line 14d)	\$	\$
<b>Part VI: Additional Factors for Consideration (See Instructions, Page 8)</b>		
16. Household Assets (List the estimated present value of all major household assets.)	Father's Household	Mother's Household
a. Real Estate	\$	\$
b. Stocks and Bonds	\$	\$
c. Vehicles	\$	\$
d. Boats	\$	\$
e. Pensions/IRAs/Bank Accounts	\$	\$
f. Cash	\$	\$
g. Insurance Plans	\$	\$
h. Other (describe)	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$

Continue to Next Page

17. Household Debt (List liens against household assets, extraordinary debt.)	Father's Household	Mother's Household
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
18. Other Household Income		
a. Income Of Current Spouse (if not the other parent of this action) Name _____ Name _____	\$ \$	\$ \$
b. Income Of Other Adults In Household Name _____ Name _____	\$ \$	\$ \$
c. Income Of Children (if considered extraordinary) Name _____ Name _____	\$ \$	\$ \$
d. Income From Child Support Name _____ Name _____	\$ \$	\$ \$
e. Income From Assistance Programs Program _____ Program _____	\$ \$	\$ \$
f. Other Income (describe) _____ _____	\$ \$	\$ \$
19. Non-Recurring Income (describe) _____ _____	\$ \$	\$ \$
20. Child Support Paid For Other Children Name/age: _____ Name/age: _____	\$ \$	\$ \$
21. Other Children Living In Each Household (First names and ages)		

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