

Monthly Handling (Clearinghouse) Fee Frequently Asked Questions (Developed by DES/DCSS for IV-D case inquiries)

1. What is a “monthly handling fee”?

The monthly handling fee (formerly known as the clearinghouse fee) is used for payment processing that assists the Support Payment Clearinghouse with collecting and distributing payments and keeping an account of all payment records. This fee will increase from \$5.00 to \$8.00 beginning April 1, 2020.

2. Why am I responsible for the monthly handling fee?

The monthly handling fee applies to the costs associated with processing your child support and/or spousal maintenance payment, distributing and keeping account of the payments in your case.

3. Why did the monthly handling fee increase?

The monthly handling fee increase will allow DCSS to better serve clients. The increase will allow the Division to provide more efficient, accurate and secure information, process improvements to case management, and provide better customer service support. This increase was allowed under Arizona Revised Statute section 25-510(d) and Arizona Administrative Rule section R6-7-103.

4. Who can I contact if I need additional information on my Non IV-D case?

Please reach out to the Clerk of Court that processed your child support case and/or spousal maintenance or if you have a Maricopa County case, please call 602-372-5375.

5. What happens if I don't pay the fee/difference?

If the amount is not paid, it will cause fee arrearages that will need to be paid before a case can close.

6. Will my payment still be posted to my case if it is less the fee amount/difference?

Yes, your payment will still be posted. However, if the full fee amount is not received it may cause fee arrearages to accumulate.

7. Why wasn't I notified ahead of time? / Was a notification sent out regarding the increase?

Communication efforts for Title IV-D cases including email, text messages, flyers, and notifications on all web-based platforms were distributed starting 60 days in advance. Employers IV-D and Non-IV-D were also notified of this change 30 days in advance. If you did not receive any communications regarding this update, we may not have correct contact information for you. It is crucial that you keep your contact information up-to-date so that we can communicate any changes regarding your case(s). Let me verify the contact information we have in the system and update any piece if needed. If in the future there are any updates to your contact information, please contact DCSS so that we can update it for you. Updates can also be made through the AZ Child Support Portal once you log in.

8. Will my employer know to include the fee increase in my wage garnishment?

Employers were notified 30 days in advance to make the update. However, we do recommend reaching out to your employer to verify that they have made this change on their end prior to the garnishment of your April paystubs.

9. What do I do if I notice the fee increase has not been deducted from my wage garnishment?

If you notice the adjusted amount was not withheld after April 1st, you will want to notify your employer and/or the DCSS so that we can contact the employer on your behalf. Ensure that they have changed the fee from \$5 to \$8. If the correct amount was not withheld, you can make a payment (provide payment options) to bring your account current.

10. I currently have fee arrearages; can I send in payment to specifically pay off the fees in order to catch up?

Yes. Any past due child support arrearages or judgments must be paid in full before any additional payments will be applied to fee arrearages. (Case workers should explain the distribution algorithm based on the case type and inform the NCP which debts will be paid in what order.)

11. The CP has waived her arrears, why can't the fee be waived?

The handling fee cannot be waived by the CP because it is associated with the processing of the child support payments and not an obligation owed to the CP.

12. Why can't the fee be taken off the child support?

The monthly support amount that DCSS collects cannot be increased or reduced by any fees. The handling fee is assessed in addition to the current support obligation. The fee is necessary and assists the program with collecting, processing and distributing payments, as well as keeping an account of all payment records. The increase in the monthly handling fee will allow the Division to provide more efficient, accurate and secure information, process improvements to case management, and provide better customer service support.

13. Where can I find this information on the website?

You can find additional information on the monthly handling fee by visiting the DES child support homepage at des.az.gov/dcss

14. Will my employer be sent a new garnishment order with the increased fee?

As a notice was sent out to all employers, Income Withholding Orders will not be automatically sent to employers. However, if your employer is requesting a new order for your IV-D case, they may contact our Employer Relations team by emailing dcssemployercentral@azdes.gov and request a new order be issued.