

Child support - non-parent carers

This factsheet tells you how someone can qualify as a child's non-parent carer and apply for child support.

Who is a non-parent carer?

You're a non-parent carer if you provide care for a child but you're not the child's parent, eg:

- a guardian
- a grandparent
- another family member
- a family friend
- any other person who provides ongoing daily care
- Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children.

Being eligible for child support

As a non-parent carer, you're only eligible for child support if:

- you care for the child at least 128 nights a year (at least 35% of the time)
- you're not living in a marriage, civil union or de facto relationship with the child's parent
- you're not receiving board and lodging payments from Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children.

How to apply for a formula assessment

You must apply for child support against each parent of the child in your care by completing an *Application to assess child support by a non-parent carer (IR954)* form. We'll assess and collect any child support payable.

If you receive a sole parent or unsupported child's benefit, you'll complete this form when you apply for a benefit from Work and Income and they'll send it to us. If not, you'll need to send the completed form to us.

If your benefit is cancelled or you don't receive a benefit

You can do one of the following:

- make a private arrangement with the liable parent and tell us to stop collecting your child support
- make a voluntary child support agreement with the liable parent, which we can administer for you
- continue receiving your current formula assessed child support entitlement from us direct
- apply for a formula assessment.



Private arrangements

You can make a private child support arrangement with either parent or with both parents. You don't need to involve us, as long as you don't receive a sole parent or unsupported child's benefit for the child.

Voluntary agreements

Working out your own agreement gives you and the parent(s) certainty, because you decide on an amount of child support that you both agree is fair. You can change the amount payable at any time, but you both have to agree to any changes. If you register your agreement with us we'll administer the payments.

To find out more, see our *Child support - voluntary agreements (IR157)* factsheet or go to www.ird.govt.nz (search keywords: voluntary agreements).

Managing your child support

If we accept your application to receive child support, we'll create child support records for you, the child and their parents. We'll contact you if we need more information. Otherwise, you and the parents will each receive a notice from us confirming that child support records exist and what this means for each of you.

Payment waiver

Non-parent carers can waive the right to receive child support from one of the parents if the non-parent carer isn't receiving an unsupported child's benefit for the child or a sole parent benefit. We must still complete an assessment for that parent but we'll tell them they aren't required to make payments. Please note that if you choose to waive payment from a parent this will include any payments already owed to you by the parent for the child you wish to waive payment for.

A non-parent carer can cancel the waiver at any time by sending us a completed *Payment waivers (IR959)* form. Payment waivers will be cancelled if the non-parent carer starts to receive an unsupported child's benefit for the child or a sole parent benefit. The cancellation of a waiver means that the parent will be required to pay the child support assessed from the date of the cancellation of the waiver.

When and how you get paid

Child support is generally due to be paid to us by the 20th of the following month. If they pay on time, we'll pay you by the 7th of the following month. For example, a child support payment for August is due on 20 September. If it's paid on time, we'll pay you by 7 October.

If you receive a sole parent or unsupported child's benefit from Work and Income for the child in your care, we'll pass the payments from the liable parent on to the government to help cover your net (after-tax) benefit entitlement. You'll receive any amount left over.

Example

Your child support entitlement is \$1,000 a month and you receive benefit payments of \$800 a month. If the liable parent pays in full and on time, the government will receive \$800 and you'll get \$200 a month.

But, if your child support entitlement is \$550 and you receive benefit payments of \$800 a month, the liable parent's child support payments will go to the government.

Please let us know immediately about any change to your personal circumstances, because it may affect your child support entitlement.

Cancelling your formula assessed child support

You can cancel your child support if you're not receiving a sole parent or unsupported child's benefit for the child in your care. If you'd like to cancel your child support, please complete a *Cancelling your child support (IR107)* form and send it to us.

If you're cancelling a formula assessment, all receiving carers of the child and any parent who has at least 28% ongoing daily care for the child under a formula assessment must agree to cancel.

If you cancel your child support you must do this for all liable parents for the child.

Where to find more information

If you'd like more information about child support, go to our website www.ird.govt.nz/childsupport This site offers general child support information.

If you register for myIR secure online services at www.ird.govt.nz you can check your child support payments, update your details online and correspond with us by secure email whenever you like.

You can view copies of all our forms and guides by going to www.ird.govt.nz and selecting "Forms and guides". You can also order copies by calling 0800 257 773.

How to contact us

By email

Send a secure email through myIR secure online services at any time. You'll need to register first at www.ird.govt.nz

By phone

From New Zealand	0800 221 221 (8 am to 5 pm weekdays)
From Australia	1800 504 042 (8 am to 5 pm New Zealand standard time weekdays)
From other countries	+64 9 984 2537 (8 am to 5 pm New Zealand standard time weekdays)

By fax

From overseas only	+64 7 959 7602
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