

## Information for Support Recipients

### What does the Family Responsibility Office (FRO) do?

FRO helps families in Ontario get the support they are entitled to by enforcing court-ordered support payments. We work to flow payments from the person who pays the support (the payor) to the person who receives it (the recipient). We do this under the authority of the Family Responsibility and Support Arrears Enforcement Act, 1996.

We enforce:

- support orders made by the Ontario courts, and
- domestic contracts that are filed with the courts.

We don't:

- determine the amount of support you're paid
- change the terms of your support order or domestic contract, or
- become involved in child custody or access issues.

### What information does FRO need from me?

We will send you a registration package as soon as we receive a support order or agreement filed with the Ontario courts. The registration package includes the following forms:

- Support Filing
- Direct Deposit Registration
- Payor Information, and
- Statement of Arrears.

You must complete these forms and return them to our office. The information you provide will help us manage your case. It is especially important in cases where the support payor does not have a job or other regular income source.

### When will I receive my first payment?

If there are no complications with enforcing payments, you can expect to start receiving them within 30 to 60 days of registration. If the payor is not making payments or if we do not know who their employer is, it may take longer to receive your first payment.

Support payors are required to make payments according to the court order or domestic contract. However, employers and other income sources are allowed to send support payment deductions according to their pay schedules, even when these dates are different from the dates in the court order. This means you may not receive payment until after the court-ordered due date.

### **How will I receive my payments?**

We will deposit your payments directly into your bank account. Please complete the Direct Deposit form in your registration package. When we receive a support payment from the payor (or their income source) we deposit it in your account usually within 48 hours, as long as we have all the correct account information.

### **What are my responsibilities?**

Let us know immediately if any of your personal information changes, including your:

- name – you must send us proof of the change (such as a birth or marriage certificate, sworn affidavit or a court order)
- direct deposit information
- telephone number(s)
- address, or
- support order or obligation (if ends or changes).

Tell us about changes to the payor's information:

- new address
- telephone number(s), or
- employer/income source.

Also, please tell us if the payor:

- buys or sells property or another major asset (a house, car or boat)
- opens a new business, or
- sends you a payment directly - when your case is filed with us, the payor must make all support payments through our office.

## Why are my support payments late?

Payments may be late for several reasons, including:

- postal delays
- payments with missing/incorrect information (such as the wrong seven-digit case number), and
- a change in the payor's employment.

## What if my support payments fall behind?

If you haven't received a payment in more than 30 days, please contact us right away.

## How do we enforce support payments?

Enforcement actions that we can take include:

- garnishing bank accounts or money payors may be entitled to receive from the Government of Canada (for example, income tax refunds, employment insurance benefits, Canada Pension Plan benefits and Old Age Security benefits)
- reporting payors to the credit bureau
- suspending payors' driver's licences, Canadian passports and federal licences (such as a pilot's licence)
- placing a lien on payors' personal property or issuing a writ of seizure and sale for property they own
- reporting payors to their professional or occupational organizations
- seizing payors' lottery winnings, and
- commencing Default Hearings, which could result in up to 180 days of jail time.

## Can I withdraw my case from FRO?

Yes. However, both you and the payor must agree in writing to withdraw. To do this you must send us a completed Notice of Withdrawal form. The form is available on our website at [www.ontario.ca/FRO](http://www.ontario.ca/FRO).

- If the case is in arrears (you are owed money), you may withdraw without the payor's consent.
- If you assigned your support to a social assistance program (such as Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program), your caseworker must also agree to withdraw.
- If the payor owes arrears to the social assistance program, you and the payor may withdraw but we will continue to enforce for support owed to the program.

We will charge both you and the payor a fee of \$50 if either of you want to re-open the case and re-register with us at a later date.

## Where can I get more information?

Visit our website: [www.ontario.ca/FRO](http://www.ontario.ca/FRO).

Call our 24-hour automated information line for recent transactions on your case:

- 416-326-1818
- 1-800-267-7263 (toll-free)

Contact our call centre Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. EST:

- 416-326-1817
- 1-800-267-4330 (toll-free)

TTY:

- 416-240-2414
- 1-866-545-0083 (toll-free)