

FRO Facts

Information for Support Payors

When do I start paying support?

At the same time the court makes a support order or agreement, it sets out the amount of support payments and when they are to be paid. You must start paying support on the date given in the court order or agreement. If no date was specified, the first payment is due on the same day the court order was made.

When the court makes a support order, it also makes a Support Deduction Order that gives the Family Responsibility Office (FRO) the right to send a Support Deduction Notice to your employer or other regular income sources. Your employer or other regular income source will then deduct the amount of support that you owe from your wages or other income. Both orders are sent to the FRO so we can begin working on the case.

It can take time before the FRO receives the information it needs to process the support payments. During that period, you are still responsible for making any support payments owing.

How can I make my payments?

When you have an employer or regular source of income, the FRO arranges for support payments to be deducted from your income and sent to us. Once the FRO has received the funds, we can send the payment to the recipient, usually within 24 to 48 hours.

Until deductions start, you must make support payments through the FRO and not directly to the recipient. You must also make your payments through the FRO if you do not have an employer or regular source of income.

You can use the following methods to make support payments directly to the FRO:

- Telebanking
- Internet banking
- Pre-authorized payments from your bank account
- Cheques or money orders.

Tips for Support Payors

- Always include your case number and your first and last name on your payment and in all correspondence with the FRO.
- Make your support payments through the FRO. Do not pay the recipient directly.
- The FRO cannot change the amount of support you pay. Only the court can adjust the amount of support payments.

What are my responsibilities?

Get to know the details of your support order or agreement. You have a legal obligation and a responsibility to respect it.

If your employment or regular income ends, you are still required to make your support payments. You can do this by sending your payments directly to the FRO. Keep records of the support payments that you make. The FRO does not issue year-end statements.

You must let the FRO know immediately if:

- You move or change your telephone number(s)
 - You change employers or there is any change in your income source
 - There are any changes to your court order, or your support obligation ends or changes.
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What if I fall behind in my support payments?

The FRO encourages payors who may fall behind in their payments to contact us as soon as possible. If you do fall behind in your payments, we will try to work with you to enter into an agreement to pay the arrears by installments, in addition to paying your ongoing support payments. This is known as a Voluntary Arrears Payment Schedule (VAPS). Even with a VAPS in place, the FRO can still collect funds owed to you from federal government sources (e.g., income tax refunds, GST rebates). We can also issue a writ of seizure and sale against your property or assets. If you do sell an asset, funds will be collected from the sale to pay your arrears.

If necessary, the FRO may take additional enforcement actions including:

- Credit bureau reporting
 - Garnishment of joint bank accounts and assets
 - Driver's licence suspension
 - Suspending passports and other federal licences (e.g., a pilot's licence)
 - Taking you to court.
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What if I want to withdraw from the program?

You and the recipient must both agree in writing to withdraw from the FRO. If you do, we will stop all enforcement action and close your case.

Where can you get more information?

Go to www.theFRO.ca TTY: 416-240-2414

24-Hour Automated Information Line: 416-326-1818 or toll-free at 1-800-267-7263
for general information about the FRO and recent transactions on your case.

Customer Service Unit: 416-243-1909 or toll-free at 1-888-815-2757
for general inquiries such as payment information, to update your address or to request forms.
Call Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Enforcement Call Centre: 416-326-1817 or toll-free at 1-800-267-4330
for specific enforcement information. Call Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

FRO Facts

Information for Support Recipients

What information does the Family Responsibility Office (FRO) need from me?

The FRO will send you a filing package as soon as we receive a support order or agreement filed with the Ontario courts. The filing package includes the following forms: Support Filing, Direct Deposit Registration, Payor Information and Statement of Arrears.

You must complete the forms in the filing package and return them to the FRO. The information that you provide helps us develop the most appropriate and effective enforcement strategy for your case. It is especially important in cases where the support payor does not have a regular income source, such as an employer.

When will I receive my first payment?

If the support payor's employer is known or they are independently making payments and there are no complications with enforcing payments, you can expect support payments to start arriving within 30 to 60 days of registration.

Payment dates may vary. Support payors are required to make payments according to the court order or agreement.

However, employers and other income sources are allowed to send support payment deductions according to their pay schedules, even when these dates do not coincide with the due date set out in the court order.

"When the FRO receives a payment from the payor or the payor's income source, we can send the payment to the recipient, usually within 24 to 48 hours."

An employer has two weeks to set up the payroll deduction once they receive the Support Deduction Notice from the FRO. The support payment must be deducted in the next pay period and sent to the FRO. Note that an income source cannot deduct the support payments from an employee's pay before the support is due. This is why you do not receive payment until after the court-ordered due date.

How will the FRO forward payments to me?

You can receive your payments by:

- Direct deposit into your bank account
- Cheques mailed to you.

What are my responsibilities?

Current information is essential for the FRO to enforce your case. Let us know immediately if:

- You move or change your telephone number(s)
 - You change your name. You must send the FRO proof of the change (e.g., a birth or marriage certificate, sworn affidavit or a court order)
 - There are any changes to your court order, or the support obligation ends or changes
 - You have new information about the support payor such as a new address, telephone number or job. You should also inform us if you are aware of the support payor buying or selling property or a major asset (e.g., a house, car or boat), or opening a new business
 - You receive a payment directly from the payor. The payor must make all support payments through the FRO when your case is filed with us
 - There are any support payment arrears owing at the time of registration. We cannot send you any payments we have received for arrears owed to you before you filed with the FRO, until we have your completed Statement of Arrears form.
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What if my support payments are late?

It can take up to 30 days after the date that your support is due for the payments to be received at our office. Once the FRO receives the funds, we can, in most cases, process them within 48 hours. There can be several reasons for late payments such as postal service delays, missing or wrong information about the case that the payment applies to, or a change in the payor's employment. If more than 30 days have passed since the court-ordered support due date, report the missing payment to the FRO. We will then determine why the payment was not made and take the appropriate steps to collect it.

What if my support payments fall behind?

When support payments fall behind, the FRO will try to work with the payor to enter into an agreement to pay any arrears by installments, in addition to paying the ongoing support payments. We can also collect funds from federal government sources and take enforcement actions to recover the arrears.

What if I want to withdraw from the program?

You and the payor must both agree in writing to withdraw from the FRO. If you do we will stop all enforcement action and close your case.

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Go to www.theFRO.ca TTY: 416-240-2414

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