

CHILD SUPPORT ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

HOW TO PREPARE AND PRESENT YOUR CASE

HELPFUL HINTS

1. Before the hearing, list the points you want to address at the hearing. Use that list to prepare your case.
2. Testify only when it is your turn. Do not interrupt. You will be given an opportunity to speak and ask questions.
3. Testify to what you know. Don't guess. If you don't know the answer, say that you don't know.
4. Don't repeat what has already been said.
5. Make your questions short and to the point. Ask only one question at a time. Do not argue with the answers given by the other party. Make notes so that you can respond when it is your turn to speak.
6. Make sure to bring your evidence to the hearing, and make sure the evidence is necessary to your case.
7. Don't argue or get angry during the hearing. You will do a much better job of presenting your case if you remain calm.

What is a Hearing?

A hearing is a fact-finding process. The hearing is held at the child support enforcement agency. The purpose of the hearing is usually to determine how much child support should be paid or is owed or if an error has been made by the agency. The hearing gives both

parties the chance to tell their sides of the case.

Hearings are conducted in English. If your knowledge of English is limited, or if you are hearing or speech-impaired, contact your child support enforcement agency imme-

diately. The agency can arrange to have an interpreter at your hearing.



What is the Role of the CSEA Hearing Officer?

The CSEA Administrative Hearing Officer is a neutral decision-maker and does not represent either party to the case. The hearing officer's duties include issuing orders pertaining to paternity, including genetic testing, and orders for

child support and medical support.

By rule, the administrative hearing officer must be a "notary public, an individual with extensive child support program knowledge,

someone who is objective and very familiar with issues of paternity and support, including establishment, modification and enforcement of support, and conducting hearings subject to court review".

What Happens at a Hearing?

The child support administrative hearing officer will explain what will happen during the hearing and will answer your questions. The parties will then be sworn in and questioning will begin. Usually no witnesses other than the custodial and non-custodial

parent are needed in the hearing.

At Administrative Support and Administrative Review hearings you will be given a chance to offer written evidence, such as paystubs, tax returns and proof of insur-

ance and child care expenses. Each party is expected to bring his or her evidence to the hearing and have it available for review.

The hearing officer will take testimony and review the evidence and issue a decision.

Do I Have to Attend the Hearing?

If you asked for the hearing, you need to participate. If you did not ask for the

hearing, but were given notice of the hearing, you should participate in order to

present evidence for the hearing officer to consider.

Do I need an Attorney?

Parties usually participate in a child support hearing without the assistance of an

attorney. You may be represented at the hearing by an attorney. However, you will

be responsible for paying your own legal fees.

What Evidence is Needed at my Hearing?

In a case involving the establishment or modification of child support, you should be prepared to discuss your past and current earnings, your household income, your other dependents and the expenses related to the child or children for whom the support is being sought. If there are any unusual factors relating to your circumstances which you believe might affect the decision,

you must be prepared to share that information at the hearing. You should also have specific information about health insurance costs, including a breakdown of the cost for single coverage and family coverage. The child support enforcement agency may send a checklist to you of items to bring to the hearing.

For other types of hearings,

please bring relevant written documents (i.e. school records, bank account information, etc.) to prove your case.



What Happens after the Hearing?

The administrative hearing officer will consider the testimony and written evidence submitted at the hearing

and issue a decision. If you disagree with the decision, you have the right to file an objection. Refer to the hear-

ing decision for information about the timeframe in which to file your objection with the agency.



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