

## YOUR KIDS NEED TO KNOW

They need you now more than ever. The bottom line is that children who have the support of both of their parents are less likely to:

- ✓ Be financially disadvantaged
- ✓ Drop out of school
- ✓ Use drugs
- ✓ Become a teen parent

In North Carolina, all child support orders are issued by a court. However, parents do not have to appear before a judge if they agree on the amount of child support that is based on the North Carolina Child Support Guidelines.

### LET'S WORK TOGETHER

We prefer to work with both parents to establish a child support order. By reaching an agreement a court hearing is not required.



### Guilford County Child Support

Greensboro  
400 West Market St.  
Greensboro, N. C. 27401-2259  
Phone (336) 641-6438  
Fax: (336) 641-3216

High Point  
325 E. Russell Street  
High Point, N. C. 27260  
Phone (336) 641-7770  
Fax (336) 845-7552

[www.guilfordcountync.gov/  
our-county/child-support](http://www.guilfordcountync.gov/our-county/child-support)

[www.ncchildsupport.ncdhhs.gov/](http://www.ncchildsupport.ncdhhs.gov/)



# ESTABLISHING AN ORDER TO PAY CHILD SUPPORT

*Here's What You Need to Know*

## Guilford County Child Support Agency

*"Making a difference in the  
lives of the children we serve"*



# ESTABLISHING AN ORDER TO PAY SUPPORT

## CHILD SUPPORT BASICS

In North Carolina, state law requires that child support is determined by a formula called the North Carolina Child Support Guidelines (NC GS § 50-13.4). The guidelines assume that the child should receive the same proportion of each parent's income as if they lived together. The guidelines are designed to meet the needs of children while being fair to both parents.

Child support orders indicate the amount of money that a non-custodial parent must pay. Computing the support involves the following steps:

- ✓ Calculating the parents' total gross income
- ✓ Calculating the percentage that each parent contributes to the total

The result is the amount of the child support payment. The guidelines also take into account each additional child involved in a child support case, child care costs, and medical insurance costs for children in the order.

The court will also consider:

- ✓ All income of both parents, (except income from public assistance)
- ✓ Other biological or adopted children, but not step-children

You should also know that:

- ✓ The child support obligation has priority over all other financial obligations
- ✓ If a parent is not employed or financial information is not available, minimum wage can be used to determine his or her income
- ✓ In addition to setting child support, the order may require one or both parents to provide health insurance coverage for the children

## HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORK?

The non-custodial parents are served with a Civil Summons and Complaint. They can respond to this document by doing one of the following:

- ✓ Filing an answer
- ✓ Providing financial information to the child support office prior to the hearing date and signing a voluntary support order

- ✓ Getting an attorney who will help respond to the Complaint
- ✓ Appearing at a hearing

If the non-custodial parent doesn't respond or appear in court when a hearing is set, the court **will** enter a order requiring the non-custodial parent to provide support. The court accepts the information contained in the Complaint to Establish Support as true and issues an order to pay child support based on that information.



[www.guilfordcountync.gov/our-county/child-support](http://www.guilfordcountync.gov/our-county/child-support)

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