

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



ASSIGNMENT OF RIGHTS

CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

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WHAT IS ASSIGNMENT OF RIGHTS

- Assignment of rights means that a parent transfers their rights to receive some or all of their child support payments to the District to pay it back for public assistance benefits received from the District under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). TANF benefits may include a cash award and/or medical insurance (Medicaid).



- When a parent receives TANF, the District pays for the benefits to be provided to the parent and family, and in return the District is allowed to keep child support payments to reimburse itself for the cost of the benefits.
- **Current Child Support:** By accepting TANF, you have assigned your rights to receive child support payments to the District. Because of this assignment, you will not receive current support payment until you are no longer receiving public assistance under TANF, except for those child support payments received from the \$150 Pass Through.
- **Arrears:** When the non-custodial parent, who is ordered to pay child support, falls behind in paying the child support obligation, s/he accrues arrears. You may be entitled to receive arrears depending on when the arrears accrued.

HOW DO YOU ASSIGN YOUR RIGHTS?

- The assignment of rights takes place automatically when you accept TANF benefits. When you apply for TANF benefits, you are given an application that includes a section that addresses your assignment



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of rights to child support. When you sign the application to accept TANF, you are also assigning your rights to receive child support to the District. If you fail to sign the assignment of rights section, you will **not** receive TANF benefits.

HOW LONG DOES AN ASSIGNMENT OF RIGHTS LAST?

- The assignment ends when you no longer receive public assistance. When you are no longer receiving public assistance, you will receive your current support. Current support will go to you first before any assigned arrears are paid to the District.
- The assignment ends when you no longer receive TANF; however, you may or may not be entitled to receive support arrears that accrued before or during the period that you received TANF.
- Any arrears that are owed to you may be called unassigned arrears or never assigned arrears.
- Any arrears that the District keeps are called assigned arrears.



WILL I BE PAID FOR SUPPORT ARREARS THAT ACCURED BEFORE I RECEIVED PUBLIC ASSISTANCE?

- Before receiving public assistance, you should have received your regular child support payment. Some arrears that accrued before you received public assistance, may be assigned to the District.

However, the District is only entitled to reimburse itself up to the total amount of public assistance benefits it paid to you.

WILL I BE PAID FOR SUPPORT ARREARS THAT ACCURED AFTER I AM NO LONGER RECEIVING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE?

- Any arrear that accrue after your public assistance period has ended will belong to you. These arrear (called never assigned arrear) will be paid to you before the amount assigned to the District are paid, unless the payment source is Federal Tax intercept.

WILL I BE PAID SUPPORT ARREARS WHILE I AM RECEIVING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE?

- When you receive TANF, the District keeps track of the amount of public assistance benefits you receive. To pay itself back for this assistance, the District is allowed to keep the current child support payments and support arrear. If the amount of the support arrear collected is greater than the amount of assistance you receive, the District will only keep the amount of support arrear that is equal to the amount given to you in TANF benefits. The rest of the support arrear will go to you. For example:

Support Arrear Collected=	\$10,000.00
Public Assistance Benefit Amount Received by You=	\$5,000.00
Permanently Assigned Arrear that remain with the District=	\$5,000.00
Unassigned Arrear owed to you =	\$5,000.00

- If the amount of public assistance you receive is greater than the amount of support arrear collected by the District, the District can keep any collected arrear that accumulated before or during the period you received public assistance period; up to the total amount of public assistance benefits that you received.
- The amount of public assistance benefit received by you that has not been repaid to the District by your current support payments or support arrear are called un-reimbursed assistance.



The arrear that accrued before and during your public assistance period may be used to pay your un-reimbursed assistance; any collected amounts that are more than the un-reimbursed assistance amount will be paid to you.



WHAT HAPPENS IF I RECEIVE MULTIPLE CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS?

- When applying for TANF you receive assistance based on a family grant. A family grant is assistance in the form of a block grant given to all members of the immediate family.
- Federal law prohibits a family grant from being calculated as per child or as an individual family member grant. The total amount of support owed to you for all of your children is assigned to the District.
- Once you have assigned your rights, the District keeps any amount of support from any NCP in your case in order to repay itself. Each NCP has an obligation to pay child support and your assignment includes the support owed by all NCP's. The support money that is due from the NCP who is not currently paying will also be applied to the repayment of the family grant once those payments are made. Any arrear left after your family grant is repaid will be paid to you.

QUESTIONS

- If you have questions concerning your assignment of rights please contact the Office of the Attorney General, Child Support Services Division, Customer Service Unit at (202) 442-9900.