



Family-based arrangement form

➤ a child maintenance decisions guide

Sorting out separation

Web
app

Get help with issues around your break-up with an easy-to-use web app **tailored to your needs** including:

- children and parenting
- relationships and conflict
- health
- housing
- work and benefits
- money
- legal

Over 50
organisations
who can help

Expert help at
the click of a
button

Find us on many websites
including cmoptions.org



Brought to you by
**Help and Support
for Separated Families**

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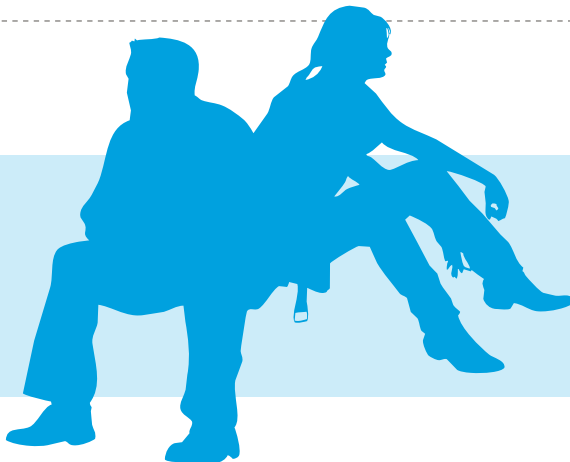
Child Maintenance Options

is a free and impartial service that provides information, tools and support to help you make informed choices about child maintenance arrangements. We can:

- help parents set up a child maintenance arrangement between themselves (a ‘family-based’ arrangement) and give them the support to keep it going
- give you information about, and help with, other types of child maintenance arrangement
- offer practical information on a range of subjects linked to separation, such as housing, work and money, and put you in touch with organisations who can give you more specialist help and advice.

Get in touch with Child Maintenance Options on 0800 988 0988* or online at cmoptions.org

*See inside back cover for information about call charges



Supporting separating and separated families

Most children, in most circumstances, benefit from having both parents involved in their lives in a positive way, whether they live with them or not. Child maintenance is one way of making this happen, but it's only part of the story. We have written this guide to help parents build relationships and work together, to make sure their children receive as much support as possible – financial and otherwise.

The information in this leaflet is only a guide and does not cover every circumstance. We recommend that you also get independent professional advice which applies to your circumstances. You can find a list of specialist organisations that may be able to help at the back of this guide. Although we have taken every care in writing this publication, we cannot guarantee that information is accurate, up-to-date or complete, because it can change over time.

Child Maintenance Options does not endorse the content of any external websites.



Our family-based arrangement

What we've agreed about child maintenance for our children.

A Our children who we're responsible for

Our first child

Full name

Date of birth

/

/

Address

Our second child

Full name

Date of birth

/

/

Address

Our third child

Full name

Date of birth

/

/

Address

Our fourth child

Full name

Date of birth

 / /

Address

B The parents who made this arrangement and agree to follow it

Mother

Full name

Address

Phone

Email

Weekly income

 £

Father

Full name

Address

Phone

Email

Weekly income

 £

C The payments

If you need help working out the amount of maintenance to pay, use our online calculator at **cmoptions.org** or call us on **0800 988 0988***.

For our first child

Who pays?

How much?

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date for payment?

(for example: every Friday, last working day of the month)

First payable date

 / /

How paid?

(for example: cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we decide on this amount?

Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(for example: holidays, school fees, uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value?

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Review date

 / /

C The payments

For our second child

Who pays?

How much?

£

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date for payment?

(for example: every Friday, last working day of the month)

First payable date

How paid?

(for example: cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we decide
on this amount?

Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(for example: holidays, school fees, uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value?

£

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Review date

C The payments

For our third child

Who pays?

How much?

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date for payment?

(for example: every Friday, last working day of the month)

First payable date

 / /

How paid?

(for example: cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we decide
on this amount?

Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(for example: holidays, school fees, uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value?

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Review date

 / /

C The payments

For our fourth child

Who pays?

How much?

£

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date for payment?

(for example: every Friday, last working day of the month)

First payable date

 / /

How paid?

(for example: cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we decide
on this amount?

Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(for example: holidays, school fees, uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value?

£

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Review date

 / /

D Our promise

We've both read this arrangement carefully, and agreed to it. By signing here, we promise to keep to the arrangement, for the sake of our children. If either of us is unable to keep to this arrangement, for any reason, we agree to let the other parent know.

Mother

Signed

Name

Date

 / /

Father

Signed

Name

Date

 / /

This is not a legal document, but signing this arrangement is a clear statement of our commitment to our children.

Review date

 / /

Why is a family arrangement a good idea?

If you make a family arrangement, it can help you and the other parent to keep on good terms. It costs nothing to set up and nobody else needs to get involved. Also, both of you may be able to agree new terms quickly and easily when your circumstances change.



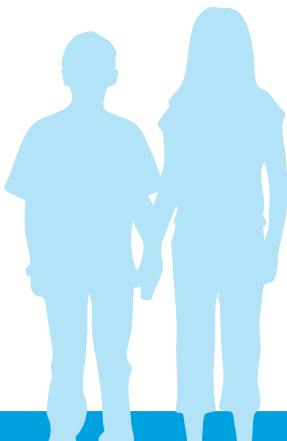
Working out an amount

In a family arrangement, you don't have to follow a set of rules to work out child maintenance.

You and the other parent could agree on a weekly amount or include payments 'in kind'. Payments in kind are when one parent pays for things like, school uniforms and clothes, food, school fees or home repairs – rather than paying money to the other parent.

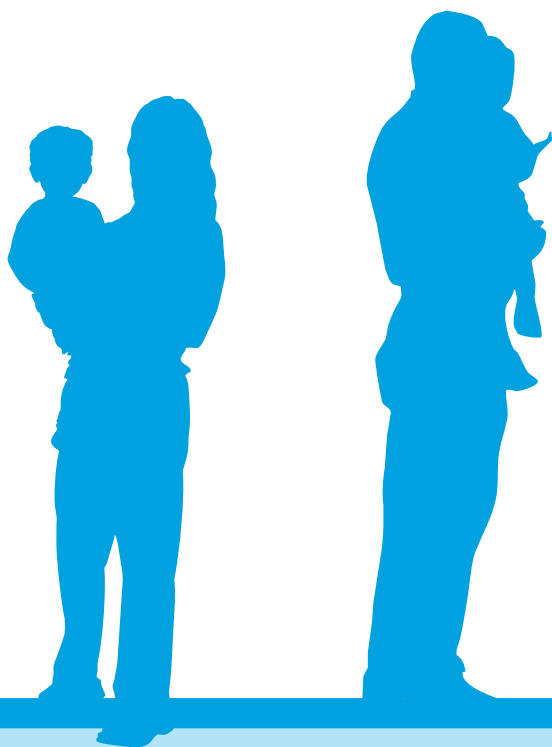
The important thing is that you both sign up to the arrangement and that it provides reliable financial support towards your child's everyday living costs.

If you need help working out the amount to pay, based on income, you could use our online calculator at **cmoptions.org** or call us on **0800 988 0988***.



Agreeing how often to pay

The agreed amount could be paid weekly, every two weeks or once a month – whatever suits both of you. Some people find it easier to budget by paying or receiving maintenance payments at the same time as their wages or benefits reach their bank account. What suits both of you will depend on your circumstances.

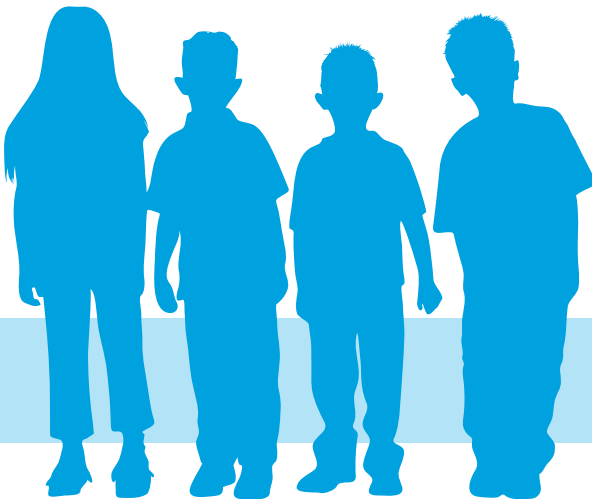


How to make or receive payments

There are different ways of making and receiving the payments, for example standing order from a bank account, cheque or cash. Some parents find it helpful to keep a record of payments paid and received. A standing order is best for making sure that payments are made in full and on time, and are recorded on paper.

Keeping a written record

Whatever you both agree, it's vital that you write it down clearly so there's no misunderstanding. Your arrangement is not legally binding, but signing it is a way of showing your strong personal commitment.



What if my circumstances change?

Things change over time, so you may want to agree a date now to sit down and review your arrangement together – perhaps every 6 months.

How often you do this will depend on your own circumstances (for example, changes to your employment, new relationships and living arrangements).

What if a family arrangement breaks down?

If your family arrangement breaks down, perhaps because payments aren't being made, talk to the other parent or call us at Child Maintenance Options.

Call **0800 988 0988*** or go to **cmoptions.org** to find out more.

What if more than one child is involved?

If you have more than one child with the same parent, you may be able to come to an arrangement for all your children at the same time. Our form has space for four children. If you have children with more than one person, you will have to come to an arrangement with each parent separately.



Child Maintenance Options is a free service that provides information and support to help parents make decisions about child maintenance



Contact us

Freephone **0800 988 0988***
8am–8pm Monday to Friday
9am–4pm Saturday
cmoptions.org

This leaflet is also available in other languages, in large print, in Braille and on audio cassette. You can get these formats by calling us on freephone **0800 988 0988***

Our TextBox and textphone number is **0800 988 9 888***

***Call charges**

Calls to 0800 numbers are free from BT land lines but you may have to pay if you use another phone company or a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

Calls to 0845 numbers from BT land lines should cost no more than 4p a minute with a 15p call set-up charge. You may have to pay more if you use another phone company or a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

Calls from mobile phones can cost up to 40p a minute, so check the cost of calls with your service provider.



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