



Australian Government

Department of Families,
Housing, Community Services
and Indigenous Affairs

Child Support Scheme Reforms

Fact sheet Twelve: Minimum payments

The Child Support Scheme is intended to reflect broad community values – and one of those values is that both parents should contribute to the cost of raising their children. In its review of the Scheme, an independent Ministerial Taskforce on child support found that there was community support for non-resident parents on low incomes paying some child support – like all other non-resident parents.

Minimum payment for each family

Previously, if a parent paid child support to more than one family, the minimum payment of a flat \$5 per week was split between the families.

As part of Stage One of the Child Support Scheme Reforms, annual indexing of the minimum payment was introduced. For child support periods beginning in 2008, the minimum payment is \$6.50.

From 1 July 2008, the parent is required to pay the minimum payment to each family. This guarantees that each family receives at least the minimum payment in child support. However, if the parent cares for the children at least 14 per cent of the time (at least 52 nights per year), they do not have to pay the minimum payment in recognition of the costs they incur in providing care. For more information see [Fact sheet Eleven: Recognising the costs of care](#).

Parents returning to work

Previously, parents who paid the minimum rate in child support were required to increase their child support payment as soon as they stopped receiving income support or increased their income to a level that justified a child support payment above the minimum rate. For some paying parents, this may have acted as a financial disincentive to improve workforce participation.

Under the new Scheme, paying parents moving from income support to paid employment continue to pay the minimum rate for 28 days after becoming liable for a higher rate of child support. This helps parents transition into employment, including managing the costs of resuming employment.

Please note this fact sheet is for general guidance only. It should not be treated as a complete or authoritative legal statement.

More details about these changes can be found in other fact sheets and on the Child Support Agency website www.csa.gov.au

If you would like to read more information on the Taskforce and how the reforms started, visit the website of the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs www.fahcsia.gov.au