

Wood County Child Support Enforcement Agency

Emancipation/Graduation/Child Support Order Termination:

Each year during graduation time, the following situation may occur -

1. The child is 18 years old and a senior in high school;
2. The last day of school attendance for seniors is in the Month of May;
3. Graduation Day falls in the Month of June;
4. The child support order is based on a monthly obligation.

A child support order is a legal document issued by a judge and the Wood County Child Support Agency has an obligation to comply with the court's order according to Wisconsin State Statutes. When a child support order is payable on a monthly basis, the child support agency adheres to the judge's order and continues that order through the Month of June. In most cases, the agency considers the day of graduation as the official end of high school education, as this is the day the diploma is obtained that officially confirms high school completion.

Pro-rating Orders:

The Wood County Child Support Agency does not "pro-rate" orders. What this means is that the order will not stop on the last day the child actually is required to attend school as a senior (possibly in the Month of May); nor will it stop on graduation day (probably in the Month of June). The child support order will continue until the end of the month in which graduation day occurs.

Mutually Agreeing Parents:

If the parents can work out an agreement whereby the child support payment would cease at the end of May, or any other type of arrangement mutually decided upon, the custodial parent/payee needs to inform the child support case worker of this in order to quickly effectuate the cessation of the order. If this does not occur promptly, the income withholding will remain in effect and arrears could accumulate. The ideal time to consider mutual agreements is when the payee or payer receives a request for graduation or emancipation notice from the Child Support Agency.

Completing High School Education Early:

On some occasions, children finish high school early due to obtaining the required number of credits prior to the end of the school year. An example would be, the child finishes school after the second quarter and is able to stop attending school in January. If the child is 18 years old at that time, the agency will stop the child support order and not honor the June graduation date as stated above. If the child is still 17 years old and has completed schooling early in this type of situation, the child support order will continue to run until the child reaches age 18.

Home School And GED Completion:

If a determination is necessary as to whether or not a GED or home school or other non-traditional educational experience meets the definition of an "accredited course of instruction leading to a high school equivalency", documentation might be requested by the case worker as confirmation that the student is pursuing the equivalency diploma or certificate and/or has completed the program.

If You Disagree:

Parents who disagree with the Wood County Child Support Agency's policy, may take the matter to the court themselves for the judge to consider other arguments and/or unique circumstances that they believe might apply to their case.

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