

# NOTICE OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS FOR SUPPORT

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

When you sign a Temporary Assistance (TA) Medical Assistance (MA) application, and for as long as you get TA and/or MA, you must:

- I. Tell your worker if you are pregnant or were pregnant in the last two months because some of the requirements below may not apply to you at this time.
- II. Turn over (“assign”) to the State and your local Department of Social Services (“the Department”) your rights and the rights of any applying family member to get support (including medical support) from anyone else. [Social Services Law (SSL) 158 and 348] The assignment of support is limited to support which accrues during the period that you and/or any family member receives assistance. If you are applying only for MA, you assign to the State and the Department your rights and the rights of any applying family member to get medical support including the rights to any medical benefits. [SSL 366(4)(h)]
- III. Cooperate with the Department to legally name who the father of your child is (“establish paternity”) and to get any support (including medical support) owed to you and any child living with you [SSL 132-a, 158, 349-b and 366(4)(h)]. If you have a good reason not to cooperate, be sure to read the “YOUR RIGHTS IF YOU DO NOT COOPERATE” section below.

To cooperate means you will have to:

- ◆ Go to the TA office and, if required, to the child support office and court to sign papers or tell what you know about the absent parent. Some things that you may be asked you may already know. See the back of this form for the section on “Information You May Already Have On The Absent Parent”.
- ◆ Name the absent parent of any child applying for or getting TA or MA, and tell what you know to help find that parent.
- ◆ Help the court in establishing paternity of any child who was born to unmarried parents.
- ◆ Tell what you know about the absent parent’s income and whether the absent parent has access to health insurance benefits to help the Department help you or any child getting TA or MA to get financial and/or medical support.

**NOTE:** By signing the TA/MA application, you are attesting under penalty of perjury that you will give true and complete information. If you don’t know information about the parent of your child, you must sign a form saying you don’t know.

A child should get support from both parents. By cooperating, you are investing in your child’s future. Some of the benefits of cooperating are:

- ◆ Finding the absent parent
- ◆ Establishing the paternity of your child is (see the back of this form for the section on “Fathers’ Rights When Paternity is Established in Court”)
- ◆ Up to \$100 per month of current support collected is given to you if there is one child active on your TA case (this is called a “pass-through” or “bonus” check); up to \$200 per month of current support collected is given to you if there are two or more children active on your TA case.”
- ◆ Getting support that could help you so that you might not need TA
- ◆ Your child gains inheritance rights to medical and life insurance
- ◆ You and your child gain rights to future Social Security, Veteran’s or other government benefits.

## YOUR RIGHTS IF YOU DO NOT COOPERATE

I. If you feel that cooperating would not be good for you or your child:

A. You have the right to make a “good cause claim” for not cooperating. The following are reasons that the Department will use to see if it can approve your good cause claim:

- ◆ Your cooperation is likely to cause physical or emotional harm to you or your child.
- ◆ Your child came from a pregnancy due to incest or rape.
- ◆ You are working with the court or an authorized adoption agency to have your child adopted.

B. You have the right to make a “good cause claim” at any time by telling a worker. If you make a good cause claim, you must:

- ◆ Give evidence to the Department to prove this. See the back of this form for the section on “Examples Of Evidence You Can Give For A Good Cause Claim”. If you need help getting the evidence, the Department will give you reasonable help. If your claim is due to fear of physical harm, and you cannot get the evidence, the Department may still be able to approve your good cause claim.
- ◆ Give your evidence **within 20 days** of making your good cause claim. You may only have 20 days even if you have a hard time getting evidence.

**NOTE:** If you are applying for TA or MA, you must give evidence and tell what you know about the absent parent, or you will get less TA and you will not get MA for yourself.

Once you make a good cause claim, the Department will do one of the following:

- ◆ Approve your claim based on the evidence you have given to prove one of the good cause reasons listed in Section I.A. above. If your claim is approved, you will not have to cooperate with the Department.
- ◆ Deny your claim because the evidence you gave was not enough to prove one of the reasons listed in Section I.A. above.
- ◆ Look into (“investigate”) your claim further so that the Department can get the information it needs to see if it can approve your claim. You may have to tell what you know about the absent parent, such as their name and address. The Department will not contact the absent parent without telling you first.

**NOTE:** The Child Support Enforcement Unit (CSEU) may review the Department’s findings and the good cause decision. If you ask for a hearing on your good cause claim, the CSEU may be involved with that hearing. If your good cause claim is approved, the CSEU may try to establish paternity or collect support only if the Department decides that this can be done without risk to you or your child. This will not be done without telling you first.

II. If you do not cooperate and do not have a good cause claim or domestic violence waiver that was approved:

- ◆ You will get less TA and will not get MA for yourself.
- ◆ TA for your child may be paid to someone else called a “protective payee”.

I have read the front and back of this notice, and:

I can cooperate in pursuing child support without exposing my children or myself to physical or emotional harm.

I cannot pursue child support, as it would expose my children or myself to physical or emotional harm.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT/RECIPIENT

DATE

I have given the applicant/recipient a copy of this notice.

SIGNATURE OF WORKER

DATE

## I. INFORMATION YOU MAY ALREADY HAVE ON THE ABSENT PARENT(S)

You will be asked to give as much information about the absent parent(s) as possible. Social Security Number(s) and date(s) of birth are especially important. This information may be found on the absent parent's following documents:

- ◆ Pay stubs
- ◆ Tax returns (may be joint returns)
- ◆ Tax Department forms and letters
- ◆ Unemployment Benefits (UIB) booklet
- ◆ Social Security/Veterans Administration records
- ◆ Workers' Compensation statement
- ◆ School/College records
- ◆ Life and auto insurance policies
- ◆ Bank books (current and old)
- ◆ Medical/Dental records and bills
- ◆ Marriage certificate
- ◆ ID cards (health insurance, school ID, alien registration)
- ◆ Other personal records

## II. EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE YOU CAN GIVE FOR A GOOD CAUSE CLAIM:

- ◆ Birth Certificate, or medical or law enforcement records, which show that your child came from a pregnancy due to incest or rape.
- ◆ Court records or other records which show that action on a legal adoption is pending in court.
- ◆ Court, medical, criminal, child protective services, social services, psychological or law enforcement records which show that the alleged or absent parent might physically or emotionally harm you or your child.
- ◆ Medical records which show emotional health history and present health history and present health status of you or your child; or written statements from mental health staff showing a diagnosis or prognosis on the emotional health of you or your child.
- ◆ A written statement from a public or private agency that you are being helped to decide whether to keep or give up your child for adoption.
- ◆ Sworn statements from people including friends, neighbors, clergy, social workers and medical staff who would know your situation and could confirm the basis of your good cause claim.

If you need help in getting evidence, ask the Department. The Department will give you reasonable help in getting the evidence you need.

## III. FATHERS' RIGHTS WHEN PATERNITY IS ESTABLISHED IN COURT

When a court has established who is the father of a child, or when a mother and father acknowledge that he is the child's father by signing an Acknowledgment of Paternity form anytime after the child is born, the father may ask to:

- ◆ Get custody of the child
- ◆ Visit with the child
- ◆ Take part in any adoption or foster care plans for the child
- ◆ Disagree with any adoption or foster care placements of the child
- ◆ Inherit from the child