

## HOW DO I CONTACT THE UNIT?

You can get more information about services, office phone numbers and addresses, and payment options on our website:

[www.childsupport.ia.gov](http://www.childsupport.ia.gov) or by calling the child support automated information line at 1-888-229-9223 (toll free nationwide).

Child Support Recovery Unit offices are open 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, except state holidays.

# MEDICAL SUPPORT

### **Policy Regarding Discrimination, Harassment, Affirmative Action, and Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) policy on non-discrimination, harassment, affirmative action, and equal employment can be viewed on the DHS website at the bottom of the page at:

[dhs.iowa.gov](http://dhs.iowa.gov)



## **WHAT IS MEDICAL SUPPORT?**

Medical support is a type of court-ordered support, like child support. It is meant to help meet the medical needs of children.

According to Iowa Code 252E, medical support is separate from the court-ordered amount of child support and may be in the form of:

- Health care coverage, or
- Cash medical support (the payment of a specific dollar amount to use for medical expenses).

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## **ESTABLISHMENT OF MEDICAL SUPPORT**

Medical support establishment involves getting a court order which includes provisions for a parent to provide medical support. The Child Support Recovery Unit (Unit) has options when establishing medical support against a parent. The exact case situation controls what type of medical support is ordered and which parent is ordered to provide it.

**When establishing a new order or modifying an existing order, the Unit may seek an order for:**

- The payor to provide health care coverage.
- The payee to provide health care coverage.
- The payor to pay a specific dollar amount for medical support.

## **ENFORCEMENT OF MEDICAL SUPPORT**

Medical support enforcement involves making sure the medical support order is followed.

**When a payor is ordered to provide medical support, the Unit:**

- Sends a notice to a payor's employer requiring the employer to enroll the payor's child(ren) in a health benefit plan.
- Uses the same methods for collecting child support, such as income withholding, federal and state tax offset, administrative levy, and license sanction, to collect cash medical support.

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## **WHAT IF AN ORDER FOR CHILD SUPPORT EXISTS, BUT IT DOES NOT INCLUDE MEDICAL SUPPORT?**

When medical support provisions are not in an existing order for child support, the Unit may modify the order to add them.

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## **WHAT IF HEALTH CARE COVERAGE IS ORDERED, BUT THE PAYOR ISN'T FOLLOWING THE COURT ORDER?**

When a health benefit plan is available through a payor's employer, the Unit sends a notice directly to the employer to enroll the child(ren) in a health benefit plan. When the payor's enrollment is required to enroll the child(ren), the

employer enrolls both the payor and the child(ren) in the health benefit plan.

When the court order requires the payor to pay a portion of the uncovered medical expenses, the payee's attorney may get a medical judgment. The Unit may also ask the Court, as time allows, to put a dollar value on the medical expenses the payee has paid. Once a judgment for the uncovered medical expenses is filed, the Unit collects this dollar amount in the same way the Unit collects child support and cash medical support.

The parent ordered to provide health care coverage is required to keep the other parent and the Unit informed of changes in health care coverage. Even if the ordered parent becomes unemployed, the obligation to provide medical support does not stop.

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## **WILL THE INSURANCE COMPANY SEND PAYMENTS FOR MEDICAL EXPENSES DIRECTLY TO THE PAYEE?**

When a health care provider submits a claim, the insurance company sends the payment directly to the health care provider. When a payee submits a claim, payment is sent to the payee. If the Medicaid program pays a health care provider for your children's medical expenses, payment goes to the Medicaid program.