

Maryland's Child Support Guidelines

Updates to Family Law

Maryland's 2020 Legislative Session codified changes required by federal law. Additionally, the legislative changes enhance policies regarding child support for low-income families. The following changes will go into effect on July 1, 2022:

1

Guidelines Schedule

The child support guidelines schedule is based on economic data. A basic support amount is determined by the number of children and the parents' combined adjusted income.

| | July 2022 Guidance | Current Guidance |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Schedule Range | \$0 - \$30,000 | \$100 - \$15,000 |
| | All incomes have specific basic support amounts in the schedule. | Very low incomes do not have specific basic support amounts in the schedule. |

2

Self-Support Reserve (SSR)

The SSR is the minimum amount of income parents may retain after paying child support. The SSR is automatically applied to orders using combined incomes below a certain threshold, referred to as the SSR range.

| | July 2022 Guidance | Current Guidance |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| SSR Amount | \$1,145 110% 2019 FPL for one person | \$867 100% 2008 FPL for one person |
| Deviations | Courts may deviate when the obligation would leave obligors with less than \$1,145. | No deviation criteria to ensure obligors maintain a minimum income after paying support. |
| Visibility in Maryland Law | The SSR is defined in Maryland Law and SSR-range incomes are identified in the schedule. | The SSR is not defined in Maryland Law. The SSR range is invisible. |

3

Income Imputation

Courts may impute, or assign, incomes to parents who are found to be voluntarily impoverished or earning an amount lower than their potential income. Imputation to unreasonable amounts negatively affects payment compliance.

| | July 2022 Guidance | Current Guidance |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Voluntarily Impoverished | Defined in Maryland Law. The court must provide a finding of voluntary impoverishment if a parent disputes it. | No definition in Maryland Law. No guidance for when a parent disputes voluntary impoverishment. |
| Potential Income | Courts may base potential income on additional factors outlined by federal law. | Potential income may be based on work history and prevailing job opportunities and wages. |

Updates were scheduled for October 2021 but postponed to July 2022.

Review federal regulations here.

Review Maryland's guidelines update bill, S.B. 847, here.

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