



MORE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I LIVE IN ANOTHER STATE. CAN YOU TAKE MY CASE?

We may be able to prosecute your case if the suspect (non-custodial parent) lives in Mississippi and/or if the support order is a Mississippi order. The State of Mississippi must have jurisdiction. If you have a difficult interstate case with a large arrearage, you may want to seek federal prosecution.

WHAT IS THE AGE LIMIT OF THE CHILD FOR YOUR OFFICE TO CONSIDER A CASE FOR CRIMINAL PROSECUTION?

The Non-Support of a Child statute limits cases to children 18 and under. (Mississippi Code Annotated § 97-5-3)

IN ADDITION TO THE CASE SUBMISSION FORM, WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU NEED FROM ME?

Gather all necessary information to make a case against the non-custodial parent, including, but not limited to: birth certificates, paternity papers, divorce decrees, modifications in the case involving the minor child/children, child support withholding orders, and an affidavit of accounting from DHS. We ask that you submit certified copies.

HAVE YOUR CASE REVIEWED

To have your case reviewed for possible prosecution, visit www.agjimhood.com

Submit a form online or by mail. Visit the Child Desertion Unit page (located under the 'Families' tab on the site).

Forms submitted by mail should be sent to:
Child Desertion Unit
P.O. Box 220
Jackson, MS 39205



ATTORNEY
GENERAL
JIM HOOD
STATE OF
MISSISSIPPI

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ENSURING SUPPORT FOR OUR CHILDREN



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW DO I SUBMIT A CASE TO THE CHILD DESERTION UNIT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE?

Complete and mail in a Case Submission Form, which can be found online. After reviewing your case, our office may decide that criminal prosecution is appropriate. However, please remember that submitting a Case Submission Form does not guarantee that our office will be able to prosecute your case.

IF I NEED HELP COLLECTING CHILD SUPPORT, WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?

The Attorney General's Office does not collect child support. Please contact the Department of Human Services or a private attorney for help with child support collection matters.

WHO HAS AUTHORITY OVER THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES?

The Governor of Mississippi has authority over the Department of Human Services. The Attorney General has no authority over DHS. The Attorney General's Office does not collect child support.

WHAT IS THE CRIMINAL PUNISHMENT FOR BEING CONVICTED OF NON-SUPPORT OF A CHILD?

This crime is a felony. If convicted of a first offense, the fine ranges from \$100 to \$500 or a commitment of up to five years in the custody of the MS Department of Corrections. A second or subsequent offense carries a fine between \$1,000 and \$10,000, or a two to five year commitment to MDOC, or both, at the court's discretion.

WHO WE ARE... WHAT WE REQUIRE...

The Child Desertion Unit is dedicated to the criminal prosecution of delinquent child support cases, addressing the chronic and persistent issue of parents not providing emotional and monetary support for their children.

The unit investigates and prosecutes cases where great efforts have been made in exhaustion of all other remedies, willful non-payment is evident, and criminal prosecution will send a strong message to other non-custodial parents that enforcement of support obligations is a priority in Mississippi.

The Child Desertion Unit has specific criteria that each case must meet in order to be considered for criminal prosecution:

- At least \$10,000 in arrears OR years without voluntary payment
- Exhausted all chancery court remedies, such as:
 - Multiple orders of contempt
 - Incarceration
 - License Suspension
 - IRS intercepts
- Non-custodial parent has the ability to pay but simply refuses:
 - Employment verified
 - History of quitting jobs to avoid withholding of support
 - No SSI or SSA cases absent extenuating circumstances