

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About 2009 Change to Parental Fee Schedule

Q: Why are the parental fees being changed and when does it start?

A: In response to California's budget crisis, Welfare and Institutions Code Sections 4677 and 4784 was amended to allow the parental fee schedule to be adjusted effective July 1, 2009. This action was taken to update the parental fee schedule to reflect the current cost of raising a child in California.

Q: When was the last increase to parental fees?

A: The last parental fee schedule became effective February 16, 1989. Except for an adjustment in 2003 to the maximum fees to be paid based on the age of the child, the parental fees have not changed for over 20 years.

Q: Who will be affected by the fee increase?

A: Parents of children under the age of 18 who are receiving 24-hour out-of-home care services through a Regional Center, with family incomes above the Federal Poverty Level.

Q: If my rate is increased, how much will it be?

A: If your child was placed in 24-hour out-of-home placement on or after July 1, 2009, your parental fee will be based on the new schedule that is effective July 1, 2009. ([Parental Fee Schedule](#))

If your child was placed in 24-hour out-of-home placement prior to July 1, 2009 and a fee increase is appropriate, the fee will be adjusted based on family size and income, and phased in over a three year period in the following manner:

- For the first year, your fee will be your current fee + 1/3 of the difference between your old fee and the new fee shown on the schedule effective July 1, 2009.
- For the second year, your fee will increase by another 1/3.
- For the third year, your fee will increase to the full amount as shown on the schedule.

Q: How is the monthly parental fee determined?

A: The parental fee is based on the age of the child in placement, the size of your family, and the family's gross income. If the income is below the Federal Poverty Level, then you will not be assessed a parental fee. The Federal Poverty Level guidelines are issued each year by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and can be found at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/POVERTY/>.

Q: Will my parental fee be increased during the annual redetermination process?

A: Upon redetermination and based on the age of your child, an increase or a decrease of the parental fee may occur after an analysis of the family's current financial information that is provided in the Family Financial Statement.

Q: What happens if I do not provide the information needed to assess a parental fee?

A: If financial information is not provided as requested, the statute requires the fee be established at the maximum rate based on the age of the child, not to exceed the Regional Center's cost of care.

Q: I'm no longer with my child's other parent, do I have to pay the full amount of the parental fee for my child?

A: The parental fee is based on the child's family income. For parents who are no longer together, both parents' family incomes are evaluated and the parental fee is assessed based upon each parent's family income and their ability to pay, not to exceed the maximum parental fee amount determined by the age of the child.

Q: Can a parent appeal the fee assessed?

A: Yes, if a new fee amount is established the parent may appeal the determination of the parent's ability to pay the fee and/or the amount of the fee.

Q: What happens if I do not pay the parental fee amount?

A: All reasonable collection procedures will be taken, up to and including State income tax off-sets and legal actions.

Q: What actions can I take regarding this fee increase?

A: Full participation in the assessment process and providing all required financial information requested will ensure that an equitable fee is assessed.

Q: What are the collected Parental Fees used for?

A: Fees collected are deposited in the Program Development Fund used to fund new programs and may also be available for expenditure by the Department of Developmental Services to offset General Fund costs.