

# Child Support Act 1991

# **CHAPTER 48**

# CHILD SUPPORT ACT 1991

# The basic principles

- 1 The duty to maintain.
- 2 Welfare of children: the general principle.
- 3 Meaning of certain terms used in this Act.
- 4 Child support maintenance.
- 5 Child support maintenance: supplemental provisions.
- 6 Applications by those claiming or receiving benefit.
- 7 Right of child in Scotland to apply for calculation.
- 8 Role of the courts with respect to maintenance for children.
- 9 Agreements about maintenance.
- 10 Relationship between maintenance calculations and certain court orders and related matters.

#### Maintenance calculations

- 11 Maintenance calculations.
- 12 Default and interim maintenance decisions.

# Child support officers

13 Child support officers.

# Information

- 14 Information required by Secretary of State.
- 14A Information-offences.
  - 15 Powers of inspectors.

Status: Point in time view as at 10/06/2008.

**Changes to legislation:** Child Support Act 1991 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 08 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

#### Reviews and appeals

- 16 Revision of decisions
- 17 Decisions superseding earlier decisions
- 18 Reviews of decisions of child support officers.
- 19 Reviews at instigation of child support officers.
- 20 Appeals to appeal tribunals.
- 20A Lapse of appeals.
  - 21 Child support appeal tribunals.
  - 22 Child Support Commissioners.
- 23 Child Support Commissioners for Northern Ireland.
- 23A Redetermination of appeals.
- 24 Appeal to Child Support Commissioner.
- 25 Appeal from Child Support Commissioner on question of law.
- 26 Disputes about parentage.
- 27 Applications for declaration of parentage under Family Law Act 1986.
- 27A Recovery of fees for scientific tests.
- 28 Power of Secretary of State to initiate or defend actions of declarator: Scotland.

#### Decisions and appeals dependent on other cases

- 28ZA Decisions involving issues that arise on appeal in other cases
- 28ZB Appeals involving issues that arise on appeal in other cases

#### Cases of error

- 28ZC Restrictions on liability in certain cases of error
- 28ZD Correction of errors and setting aside of decisions

#### Variations

- 28A Application for variation of usual rules for calculating maintenance.
- 28B Preliminary consideration of applications.
- 28C Imposition of regular payments condition.
- 28D Determination of applications.
- 28E Matters to be taken into account.
- 28F Agreement to a variation.
- 28G Variations: revision and supersession.
- 28H Departure directions: decisions and appeals
- 28I Transitional provisions.

#### Voluntary payments

28J Voluntary payments.

#### Collection and enforcement

- 29 Collection of child support maintenance.
- 30 Collection and enforcement of other forms of maintenance.
- 31 Deduction from earnings orders.
- 32 Regulations about deduction from earnings orders.
- 33 Liability orders.
- 34 Regulations about liability orders.
- 35 Enforcement of liability orders by distress.
- 36 Enforcement in county courts.

**Changes to legislation:** Child Support Act 1991 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 08 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

- 37 Regulations about liability orders: Scotland.
- 38 Enforcement of liability orders by diligence: Scotland.
- 39 Liability orders: enforcement throughout United Kingdom.
- 39A Commitment to prison and disqualification from driving.
- 40 Commitment to prison.
- 40A Commitment to prison: Scotland.
- 40B Disgualification from driving: further provision.
- 41 Arrears of child support maintenance.
- 41A Penalty payments.
- 41B Repayment of overpaid child support maintenance.

#### Special cases

- 42 Special cases.
- 43 Recovery of child support maintenance by deduction from benefit.

#### Jurisdiction

- 44 Jurisdiction.
- 45 Jurisdiction of courts in certain proceedings under this Act.

#### Miscellaneous and supplemental

- 46 Reduced benefit decisions.
- 46A Finality of decisions
- 46B Matters arising as respects decisions
- 47 Fees.
- 48 Right of audience.
- 49 Right of audience: Scotland.
- 50 Unauthorised disclosure of information.
- 51 Supplementary powers to make regulations.
- 52 Regulations and orders.
- 53 Financial provisions.
- 54 Interpretation.
- 55 Meaning of "child".
- 56 Corresponding provision for and co-ordination with Northern Ireland.
- 57 Application to Crown.
- 58 Short title, commencement and extent, etc.

#### SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 1 — Maintenance Calculations PART I — CALCULATION OF WEEKLY AMOUNT OF CHILD SUPPORT MAINTENANCE

#### General rule

1 (1) The weekly rate of child support maintenance is the...

#### Basic rate

2 (1) The basic rate is the following percentage of the...

#### Status: Point in time view as at 10/06/2008.

**Changes to legislation:** Child Support Act 1991 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 08 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

#### Reduced rate

3 (1) A reduced rate is payable if—

#### Flat rate

4 (1) Except in a case falling within sub-paragraph (2), a...

#### Nil rate

5 The rate payable is nil if the non-resident parent—

#### **Apportionment**

6 (1) If the non-resident parent has more than one qualifying...

Shared care—basic and reduced rate

7 (1) This paragraph applies only if the rate of child...

#### Shared care—flat rate

8 (1) This paragraph applies only if— (a) the rate of...

*Regulations about shared care* 

9 The Secretary of State may by regulations provide—

#### *Net weekly income*

10 (1) For the purposes of this Schedule, net weekly income...

Regulations about rates, figures, etc.

10A (1) The Secretary of State may by regulations provide that—...

Regulations about income

10B The Secretary of State may by regulations provide that, in...

#### References to various terms

10C (1) References in this Part of this Schedule to "qualifying... Part II — GENERAL PROVISIONS ABOUT MAINTENANCE CALCULATIONS

#### Effective date of calculation

11 (1) A maintenance calculation shall take effect on such date...

#### Form of calculation

12 Every maintenance calculation shall be made in such form and...

Assessments where amount of child support is nil

13 .....

Consolidated applications and calculations

14 (1) The Secretary of State may by regulations provide—

**Changes to legislation:** Child Support Act 1991 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 08 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

#### Separate calculations for different periods

15 Where the Secretary of State is satisfied that the circumstances...

#### *Termination of calculations*

16 (1) A maintenance calculation shall cease to have effect—

SCHEDULE 2 — Provision of Information to Secretary of State

#### Inland Revenue records

- 1 (1) This paragraph applies where the Secretary of State or...
- 1A (1) This paragraph applies to any information which—

#### Local authority records

- 2 .....
- 3 In this Schedule "Revenue and Customs official" has the same...

SCHEDULE 3 — Child Support Appeal Tribunals

#### The President

1 (1) The person appointed . . . as President of...

#### Membership of child support appeal tribunals

2 (1) A child support appeal tribunal shall consist of a...

#### The chairmen

- 3 (1) The chairman of a child support appeal tribunal shall...
- 4 (1) The Lord Chancellor may appoint regional and other full-time...

#### Other members of child support appeal tribunals

5 (1) The members of a child support appeal tribunal other...

#### Clerks of tribunals

6 (1) Each child support appeal tribunal shall be serviced by...

## Expenses of tribunal members and others

7 (1) The Secretary of State may pay—

## Consultation with Lord Advocate

8 Before exercising any of his powers under paragraph 3(3) or...

#### SCHEDULE 4 — Child Support Commissioners

#### Tenure of office

1 (1) Every Child Support Commissioner shall vacate his office on...

Status: Point in time view as at 10/06/2008. Changes to legislation: Child Support Act 1991 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 08 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

Commissioners' remuneration and their pensions 2 (1) The Lord Chancellor may pay, or make such payments... Expenses of other persons 2A (1) The Lord Chancellor or, in Scotland, the Secretary of... *Commissioners barred from legal practice* Section 75 of the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990... 3 Deputy Child Support Commissioners (1) The Lord Chancellor may appoint persons to act as... 4 Determination of questions by other officers 4A (1) The Lord Chancellor may by regulations provide— Tribunals of Commissioners (1) If it appears to the Chief Child Support Commissioner... 5 Finality of decisions 6 (1) Subject to section 25, the decision of any Child... Consultation with Lord Advocate Before exercising any of his powers under paragraph 1(3), 4(1)... 7 Northern Ireland In its application to Northern Ireland this Schedule shall have... 8 SCHEDULE 4A — Applications for a variation *Interpretation* In this Schedule, "regulations" means regulations made by the 1 Secretary... Applications for a variation 2 Regulations may make provision— (a) as to the procedure to... Completion of preliminary consideration

3 Regulations may provide for determining when the preliminary consideration of...

# Information

4 If any information which is required (by regulations under this...

Joint consideration of applications for a variation and appeals

5 (1) Regulations may provide for two or more applications for...

SCHEDULE 4B — Applications for a variation: The Cases and Controls Part I — THE CASES

#### General

1 (1) The cases in which a variation may be agreed...

#### Special expenses

2 (1) A variation applied for by a non-resident parent may...

#### Property or capital transfers

3 (1) A variation may be agreed in the circumstances set...

#### Additional cases

- 4 (1) The Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe other... Part II — REGULATORY CONTROLS
- 5 (1) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision...
- 6 The Secretary of State may by regulations provide for the...

SCHEDULE 4C — Decisions and Appeals: Departure Directions and Reduced Benefit Directions etc.

#### Revision of decisions

1 Section 16 shall apply in relation to—

#### Decisions superseding earlier decisions

2 (1) Section 17 shall apply in relation to—

#### Appeals to appeal tribunals

3 (1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) and (3), section 20 shall...

#### Decisions and appeals dependent on other cases

- 4 (1) Section 28ZA shall also apply where—
- 5 (1) Section 28ZB shall also apply where—

#### Cases of error

6 (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2) below, section 28ZC shall also...

# SCHEDULE 5 — Consequential Amendments

*The Tribunals and Inquiries Act* 1971 (c.62)

1 .....

*The Northern Ireland Constitution Act* 1973 (c. 36)

2 In paragraph 9 of Schedule 2 to the Northern Ireland...

# The House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975 (c.24)

3 (1) The House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975 shall be...

The Northern Ireland Assembly Disqualification Act 1975 (c.25)

4 (1) In Part I of Schedule 1 to the Northern...

The Family Law (Scotland) Act 1985 (c.37)

5 In section 4 (amount of aliment) of the Family Law...

Bankruptcy (Scotland) Act 1985 (c.66)

6 (1) The Bankruptcy (Scotland) Act 1985 shall be amended as...

The Insolvency Act 1986 (c.45)

7 In section 281(5)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (effect of...

The Debtors (Scotland) Act 1987 (c.18)

8 (1) The Debtors (Scotland) Act 1987 shall be amended as...

## Status:

Point in time view as at 10/06/2008.

#### Changes to legislation:

Child Support Act 1991 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 08 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.