



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

1500 Jefferson Street, SE • P.O. Box 40975 • Olympia WA 98504-0975

June 8, 2022

Re: Termination of the Parent Pay Program

I am pleased to inform you that, beginning Thursday, June 9, 2022, you will no longer be charged for the cost of your child's support, treatment, and confinement in the Department of Children, Youth, and Families' (DCYF) Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) facilities and county detention facilities. In addition, any debt that you may still owe under this program is now cancelled.

We want to provide better outcomes for the youth and young adults in our care. The Parent Pay program, which was created 45 years ago and required parents to pay for the costs of their child's incarceration, ended up doing the opposite. It was potentially racist in its impact and created financial hardships for a number of families, especially for those with lower incomes, which could result in unstable homes.

Ending the Parent Pay program supports better transitions for young people returning to their communities. It no longer forces parents, who may already be living on the edge, to make the difficult choice of whether to pay for their child's incarceration or pay for rent, food, and medical care. We hope that ending this program will help to lower your financial burden, especially during these difficult times, and help build successful outcomes for young people as they return to school and jobs in our communities.

I hope this comes as welcome news and provides a bit of relief for you and your family during these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Ross Hunter
Secretary

Here are responses to some frequently asked questions (FAQs) you may have:

FAQs

Q: I have a payment plan to pay money to DCYF regarding my child, who is in a Juvenile Rehabilitation facility. Do I still owe the Department money?

A: No. As of June 9, 2022, all outstanding debts that you may still owe for the cost of your child's support, treatment, and confinement in JR facilities are canceled and considered paid in full.

Q: What about legal actions to collect the debt that I owed? Can DCYF sue me or bring some other kind of proceeding against me to collect that debt?

A: No. As of June 9, 2022, all pending actions or proceedings to recover any debt you may owe for the cost of your child's support, treatment, and confinement are terminated, including tax refund intercepts, federal and state benefit intercepts, wage garnishments, payment plans, and automatic bank account deductions.

Q: Money is being taken out of my paycheck to pay for my debt. Does this mean that my wages will no longer be garnished by my employer?

A: Yes. As of June 9, 2022, your employer may no longer withhold your earnings to pay for your child's incarceration in JR facilities.

Q: I have a payment plan to pay money for my child's detention costs at the County Juvenile Court. Do I still owe them money?

A: No. As of June 9, 2022, all outstanding debts that you may still owe for the cost of your child's support, treatment, and confinement are canceled and considered paid in full. Please contact your local county juvenile court for more information.

Q: I've already paid thousands of dollars under this program. May I recover money that I've already paid to DCYF or the Courts?

A: No. Any money already collected before June 9, 2022, will not be refunded.

Q: What if I have additional legal questions? Who should I contact?

A: You will need to contact a private attorney or a legal aid or legal assistance program.

Please refer to the law that ended Parent Pay ([House Bill 2050](#)) for more details.