

What is Child Support?

- **Explanation:** Child support is a financial obligation paid by one parent to the other to help cover the costs of raising their child. The goal is to ensure that the child's needs are met, even when the parents are no longer together.
- **Example:** "Child support is money that one parent pays to the other to help take care of the child's day-to-day needs, like food, clothing, and education."

Who Pays Child Support?

- **Explanation:** Typically, the non-custodial parent (the parent who does not have primary custody) pays child support to the custodial parent (the parent with whom the child primarily lives). This helps balance the financial responsibility for the child between both parents.
- **Example:** "If your child lives with you most of the time, the other parent would likely pay child support to help with the costs of raising the child."

How is Child Support Calculated?

- **Explanation:** In Texas, child support is calculated based on a percentage of the non-custodial parent's net resources (income after taxes and certain deductions).

The percentage depends on the number of children being supported:

- 1 child: 20% of the non-custodial parent's net resources.
 - 2 children: 25% of net resources.
 - 3 children: 30% of net resources.
 - 4 children: 35% of net resources.
 - 5 or more children: 40% of net resources.
- **Example:** "If you have one child, the other parent would typically pay 20% of their net income in child support. If they earn \$3,000 a month after taxes, they'd pay about \$600 per month."

What Does Child Support Cover?

- **Explanation:** Child support is intended to cover basic living expenses, including housing, food, clothing, education, and medical care. It helps ensure that the child's standard of living remains consistent, regardless of which parent they are with.
- **Example:** "Child support is used to cover your child's everyday needs, like paying for groceries, school supplies, medical bills, and even extracurricular activities."

Duration of Child Support

- **Explanation:** In Texas, child support usually continues until the child turns 18 or graduates from high school, whichever is later. It can extend longer if the child has a disability.
- **Example:** "Child support will continue until your child turns 18 or finishes high school, whichever comes later. If your child has a disability, it could last even longer."

Modifying Child Support

- **Explanation:** Child support orders can be modified if there is a significant change in circumstances, such as a change in income, job loss, or a change in the child's needs.
- **Example:** "If your financial situation changes—like if you lose your job or get a raise—you can request the court to modify the child support amount."

Enforcement of Child Support

- **Explanation:** If a parent fails to pay child support, there are legal ways to enforce the order, such as wage garnishment, tax refund interception, or even jail time for contempt of court.
- **Example:** "If the other parent doesn't pay child support, the court can take action to collect the money, like taking it directly from their paycheck or even placing liens on their property."