



How will the Child Maintenance Options service use my personal information?



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This leaflet is only a guide and does not cover every circumstance. It should not be taken as giving legal advice. We have done our best to make sure the leaflet is correct as of October 2008. However, it is not comprehensive and it may become inaccurate over time, for example because of changes to the law. Your position may depend on your particular circumstances and you should seek independent specialist advice before making financial decisions based on the leaflet. A list of specialist organisations that may be able to offer detailed advice is given at the end.

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About this leaflet

This leaflet tells you how and why we store and collect information about you.

To offer you impartial information and support, we sometimes need to ask you for some personal details. We take our responsibility to protect your privacy very seriously.

This leaflet explains:

- why and how we collect information from you
- what we do with it and how we protect it
- how you can ask to see any of the information we have on file about you at any time.

How the Child Maintenance Options service can help you

At Child Maintenance Options, we're here to help with questions like:

- What is child maintenance and how can I arrange it?
- How do I know what's best for me and my child?
- How can I set up a family-based arrangement?
- Where can I go for help?

We can give you free, impartial and confidential support through our helpline, website and face-to-face service.

We can explain exactly what child maintenance is and why it's important.

We can then help you to set up an arrangement (and make it work).

If you already have an arrangement and it's not working, we can help you to look at ways to get it working again.

A little extra help

Parents who live apart often need to deal with difficult practical things like money, childcare while they are at work, and feelings of stress and anger.

We might not be experts in these areas, but we can put you in touch with specialist organisations that can help.

You can find out how to contact us on the next page.

Our service is run by the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission.

Get in touch

You can contact our freephone* helpline on **0800 988 0988** and talk to someone today. We are open 8am to 8pm. Monday to Friday and 9am to 4pm Saturday.

Our people are specially trained to give unbiased information and support on child maintenance. Our service is available to any parent in England, Wales or Scotland.

You can also visit our website **www.cmoptions.org**

If you are a guardian, relative or friend, or if you have a professional interest in finding out more about child maintenance, we may also be able to help you.

* Calls to 0800 numbers are free from BT landlines but you may have to pay if you use another phone company or a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

What information do we collect?

We collect personal information that we need when you phone us, write to us or email us through our website www.cmoptions.org

The personal information we collect depends on whether you are:

- asking for information and support on child maintenance
- making a complaint
- giving us general feedback.

It may include personal details, such as your name and address, email address and details of your question. We also collect information on how our website is being used.

The personal information you give us is held by the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission. This is why the Commission is sometimes known as the 'data controller'.

Remember: You don't have to give your personal details to use the Child Maintenance Options service. However, if you don't, it may affect the way we handle your question or complaint.

How do we protect your personal information?

Any personal information you give us will be held securely by the Commission in keeping with the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Act protects your personal information and makes sure that:

- we hold and process your information only for purposes that we make clear to you in advance
- we keep your information only for as long as we need to for these purposes
- we have reliable procedures that allow us to hold and process your information securely and confidentially
- we share information about you only when the law says we have to.

How will we use your information?

Child Maintenance Options will have your information if you have contacted us or you have agreed for your contact details to be passed to us.

People usually contact us and give us their information for 1 of 3 reasons:

1 Customer enquiries

We'll use the information you give us to offer information and support on child maintenance and any other subjects our service deals with. We'll need your details to write to you or send you the information you have asked for.

2 Complaints

If you have a complaint about Child Maintenance Options, we'll use the information you give us to investigate your complaint and send you a reply. Our leaflet 'How can I complain about the Child Maintenance Options service?' says more about this.

3 Feedback

If you give us feedback on the service we offer, we will only use it to help us deal with any problems you may have had and to improve our service.

Website

When you visit the Child Maintenance Options website, it will create and store short text files, called 'cookies', on your computer. These files contain information about how you use our website and they may contain some personal details.

The cookies allow us to gather statistics on how people use our website.

We'll use this information to improve the site's layout and information, based on the way customers enter, move around and leave the site.

Asking to see your personal information

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, you have the right to ask to see what information we are storing about you in computer or paper files.

You need to ask us in writing, on paper or by email, and include:

- your full name
- your address
- your unique reference number from Child Maintenance Options, if you have one
- your National Insurance number
- details of what information you want to see.

Write 'subject access request' at the top of your letter or in the subject line of your email.

We need all these details to confirm your identity and to protect your privacy. You should include any details that may help us find the information you want.

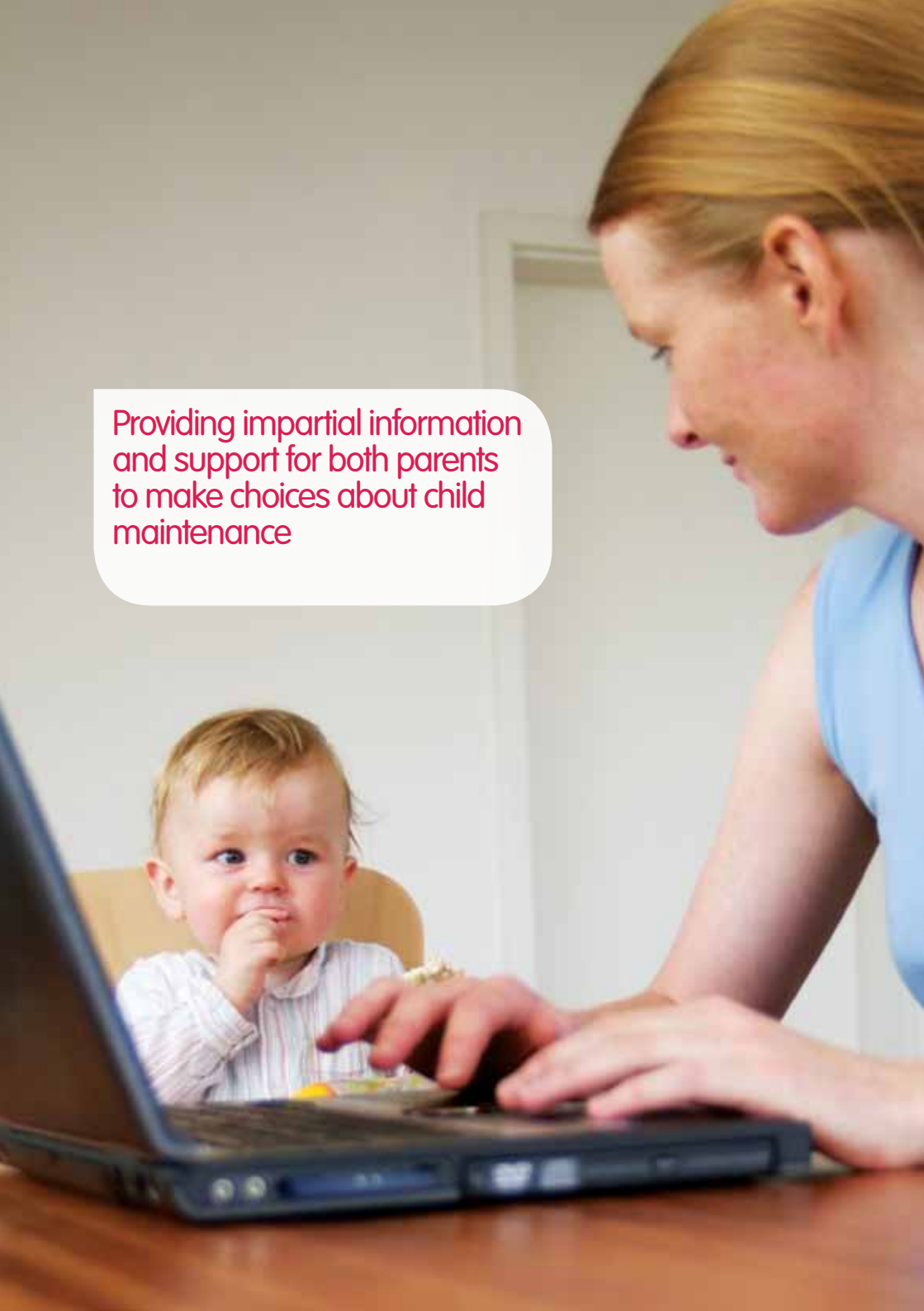
You should send us your request by:

- **writing to us at**
Child Maintenance Options
Selectapost 38
Sheffield
S97 3FJ, or
- **emailing us** through the website at www.cmoptions.org

When we have your request and all the details we need from you, we'll send you a copy of the information you have asked for – if we have it – within 40 days.

We'll send it by recorded delivery as an extra precaution to protect your information.

Providing impartial information
and support for both parents
to make choices about child
maintenance



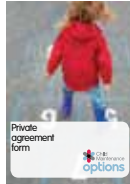
How to order our other leaflets

You can order our free leaflets by phoning **0800 958 0988**. Under each leaflet there is a short description of what to ask for when you call. They can also be downloaded from our website www.cmoptions.org

Help with making choices about child maintenance:



Child Maintenance - Getting started



Family-based arrangement form

About the Child Maintenance Options service:



How to complain about us



How we handle your information

Practical information on the issues that you may face when parenting apart:



Your legal rights and responsibilities



Your and your child's wellbeing



Housing rights and options



Money and finances



Employment rights and opportunities

Providing impartial information and support for both parents to make choices about child maintenance

Contact us

Freephone* **0800 988 0988**

8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday

9am to 4pm Saturday

www.cmoptions.org

This leaflet is also available in other languages, in large print, in Braille and on audio cassette. You can get these formats by calling us on freephone*
0800 988 0988

Our TextBox and textphone number is **0800 988 9 888**

* Calls to 0800 numbers are free from BT landlines but you may have to pay if you use another phone company, a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

Calls to 0845 numbers from BT landlines should cost no more than 4p a minute with a 6p call set up charge. You may have to pay more if you use another phone company or a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

Calls to 0870 numbers from BT landlines should cost no more than 8p a minute with a 6p call set up charge. You may have to pay more if you use another phone company or a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

Calls from mobile phones can cost up to 40p a minute, so check the cost of calls with your service provider.