



Private agreement form

Child maintenance and private agreements

What is child maintenance?

All parents have a responsibility to provide financially for their child even if they live apart from the child and the other parent. Child maintenance is regular, reliable financial support that helps towards the child's everyday living costs. The parent who is not the child's main day-to-day carer pays child maintenance to the parent who is the main carer.

Who we are

Child Maintenance Options is a service run by the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission, a new child maintenance body set up in July 2008.

We provide impartial information and support to help parents make informed choices about all the child maintenance options available. We offer a different service from the CSA, which is just one option for getting child maintenance from the other parent.

We're here to help you decide which option is best for you.

Why is a private agreement a good idea?

If you make a private agreement, it can help you and the other parent to keep on good terms. It costs nothing to set up and nobody else needs to get involved. Also, both of you may be able to agree new terms quickly and easily as your circumstances change.

What if the private agreement breaks down?

If your private agreement breaks down, perhaps because of non-payment, talk to the other parent or call us at Child Maintenance Options about renegotiating it.

If that doesn't work, you can ask the CSA to set up a new arrangement. The CSA will then collect the money and pay it to the parent with care. If a parent doesn't pay maintenance, the CSA can use its legal powers to make them pay it. You can call the CSA on **0845 713 3133** or visit **www.csa.gov.uk** if you'd like to find out more.

What if more than one child is involved?

If you have more than one child with the same parent, you may be able to come to an agreement on all your children at the same time.

Our form has space for 4 children. If you have children with more than one person, you will have to come to an agreement with each parent individually.

Our private agreement

What we've agreed about
child maintenance for our children

A. Our children

Who we're responsible for

Our first child

Full name

Date of birth

 / /

Address

Our second child

Full name

Date of birth

 / /

Address

Our third child

Full name

Date of birth

 / /

Address

Our fourth child

Full name

Date of birth

 / /

Address

B. The parents

Who made this agreement and agree to follow it

Mother

Full name

Address

Phone

Email

Income

£

Father

Full name

Address

Phone

Email

Income

£

C. The payments

If you need help calculating the amount of maintenance to pay, use our online calculator at www.cmoptions.org or call us on **0800 988 0988**.

For our first child

Who pays?

How much?

£

How often?

(e.g. once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date in the month
for payment?

(e.g. last working day of the month)

First payment date

 / /

Paid by

(e.g. cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we reach
this amount?

Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(e.g. holidays, school fees, school uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value

£

How often?

Review date

 / /

For our second child

Who pays?

How much?

£

How often?

(e.g. once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date in the month
for payment?

(e.g. last working day of the month)

Please turn over

First payment date

Paid by

(e.g. cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we reach this amount?

Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(e.g. holidays, school fees, school uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value

How often?

Review date

For our third child

Who pays?

How much?

How often?

(e.g. once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date in the month for payment?

(e.g. last working day of the month)

First payment date

Paid by

(e.g. cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we reach this amount?

Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(e.g. holidays, school fees, school uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value

How often?

Review date

For our fourth child

Who pays?

How much?

£

How often?

(e.g. once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date in the month
for payment?

(e.g. last working day of the month)

First payment date

Paid by

(e.g. cash, cheque, standing order, etc)

How did we reach
this amount?

Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(e.g. holidays, school fees, school uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value

£

How often?

Review date

D. Our promise

We've both read this agreement carefully, and agreed to it. By signing here, we promise to keep to the agreement, for the sake of our children. If either of us is unable to keep to this agreement, for any reason, we agree to let the other parent know.

Mother

Signed

Name

(please print)

Date

 / /

Father

Signed

Name

(please print)

Date

 / /

This is not a legal document but signing this agreement is a clear statement of our commitment to our children.

Review
date

 / /

Working out an amount

In a private agreement, you don't have to follow a set formula to work out child maintenance.

You and the other parent could agree on a weekly amount or include payments 'in kind'. Payments in kind are where one parent pays for things like taking the child on holiday, buying school uniforms and clothes, food, fees or home repairs – rather than paying money to the other parent.

The important thing is that you both sign up to the agreement and that it provides reliable financial support towards your child's everyday living costs. If you need help calculating the amount to pay, based on income, you could use our online calculator at **www.cmoptions.org** or call us on **0800 988 0988**.

Agreeing how often to pay

The agreed amount could be paid weekly, every 2 weeks or once a month – whatever suits both of you. Some people find it easier to budget by paying or receiving maintenance payments at the same time as salary or benefits reach their bank account. What suits both of you will depend on your circumstances.

How to make or receive payments

There are different ways of making and receiving the payments, for example standing order from a bank account, cheque or cash. A standing order is best for ensuring that payments are made in full and on time, and are recorded on paper.

Keeping a written record

Whatever you both agree, it's vital that you write it down clearly so there's no misunderstanding. Your agreement is not legally binding, but signing it is a way of showing your strong personal commitment.

What if my circumstances change?

Things change over time, so you may want to agree a date now to sit down and review your agreement together – perhaps every 6 months. How often you do this will depend on your own circumstances (for example, changes to your employment, new relationships and living arrangements).

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

Contact us

Freephone* **0800 988 0988**

8am – 8 pm Monday to Friday

9am – 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 per 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 per 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 per minute, so check the cost of calls with your service provider.

