

Summer 2011



In this issue, we offer tips on paying and receiving support, and explain how to change a support order or domestic contract.

FRO CLIENT TIPS: Paying and Receiving Support

Many payors and recipients ask us what they can do to help support flow faster. Two simple things that help:

- Always pay support directly to FRO.
- Use direct deposit into your bank account to receive payments.

Payors

Payors must make their support payments directly to FRO – not to the recipient. If you pay the recipient directly, we will not know you have paid support. Our records will show you still owe support and we may take enforcement action against you. You will also be charged an administrative fee each time you pay the recipient directly.

Recipients

We encourage recipients to use direct deposit to receive payments faster and with less chance of error. To be paid by direct deposit, you can fill out the “Registration for Direct Deposit” form, which is available at www.ontario.ca/fro.

STATS AND FACTS

Between April 1, 2011 and June 30, 2011, the Family Responsibility Office (FRO):

Collected **\$178 million**

Answered **135,688** client calls

Answered **497,950** calls through the automated information line

Suspended **715** driver's licences

Garnished **\$80,038** in lottery winnings

Registered **2,502** new cases

MYTHS AND FACTS: Missed Payments

myth: If a payor misses a support payment, FRO will pay recipients.

fact: FRO sends support to a recipient only after we receive a payment from the payor.
We cannot pay recipients if payors do not pay support.

Q&A: How Can I Change My Support Order or Domestic Contract?

From time to time, you may want to change your support order or domestic contract. For example:

- Your income could change.
- Your former spouse could remarry.
- Your child could graduate from school and get a job.

FRO cannot change your support order or domestic contract. Only the courts can change them.

You can ask the court for a change to your support order by bringing a Motion to Change forward.

To do this, complete a Motion to Change form (Form 15) and file it with the court.

Court forms are available online at www.ontariocourtforms.on.ca/english/family.

To change your domestic contract, you will have to negotiate a new one with the payor or recipient. The new contract must be filed with the Ontario Court of Justice or Superior Court of Justice (Family Court).

To complete the process, send the changed support order or new domestic contract to FRO with an Affidavit of Filing (Form 26B available at www.ontariocourtforms.on.ca/english/family).

DID YOU KNOW?

Including your 7-digit case number and full name on all payments and any written communication with FRO is critical. Cheques that arrive at FRO without the 7-digit case number or with an incomplete name can take weeks to process. This could result in arrears and late payments.

GETTING RESULTS: Enforcement Pays Off Across Borders

Enforcing support across borders can take some extra time and effort. But, as you'll see in the case below, it often pays off.

In 2004, FRO opened a case for an American recipient living in Georgia. The payor, who lived in Ontario, was required to pay \$300 in support each week. But, by January 2011, the payor owed nearly \$60,000 in support.

To help the recipient get the support she was owed, FRO filed a Writ of Seizure and Sale against the support payor in Ontario. This writ allows FRO to take the payor's profits from selling an asset, such as a house or a cottage, to pay down overdue support. FRO also gave the payor a driver's licence suspension notice.

We later heard from the payor's lawyer. FRO's writ was interfering with the payor's mortgage application, so the payor wanted to pay the outstanding support.

We negotiated with the payor's lawyer and agreed to a lump sum payment of \$25,000 and a repayment plan of \$840 per month to cover the remaining arrears and ongoing payments. In exchange, the writ was removed.

Less than two months later, we received \$25,000 toward the payor's arrears and continue to collect under our repayment plan. FRO's enforcement paid off across borders.

The Family Responsibility Office (FRO) helps people meet their child and spousal support responsibilities. Every year, FRO handles approximately 190,000 cases, representing over 400,000 people, and collects approximately \$650 million in support payments. This bulletin is published every quarter and is available online at www.ontario.ca/fro.

How to Contact Us 24-Hour Automated Information Line

Tel: 416-326-1818

Toll-free: 1-800-267-7263

Client Services Call Centre

Monday to Friday, 8 am to 5 pm

Tel: 416-326-1817

Toll-free: 1-800-267-4330

TTY: 1-866-545-0083

www.ontario.ca/fro