AG Can Help You Collect Your Child Support

By Greg Abbott
Attorney General of Texas

I recently received a letter from a mother who thanked me for making sure her children receive the child support she relies on to meet her children's basic needs. I was touched by her letter, and I want to make sure all parents know the Office of the Attorney General can help them obtain financial and medical support for their children.

Texas law requires that non-custodial parents contribute to their children's financial and medical well being according to the parents' means. The Child Support Division determines, on a case-by-case basis, which of the child support services listed below are appropriate:

- Locating a non-custodial parent;
- Establishing paternity;
- Establishing and enforcing child support orders;
- Establishing and enforcing medical support orders;
- Reviewing and adjusting child support payments; or
- Collecting and distributing child support payments.

To help parents collect child support, my office accepts applications from mothers, fathers and other individuals who request our services. Applications can be obtained by visiting Child Support Interactive on the main Attorney General Web site at www.oag.state.tx.us or by calling our 24-hour voice response system at (800) 252-8014. Parents who receive financial assistance through the Texas Department of Human Services automatically receive child support services.

I encourage those who apply for child support services to supply as much information as possible to speed up the process of establishing or enforcing their child support order. The most important information an applicant can provide, aside from the other parent's current address, is the name and address of the other parent's current employer. If the current employer is not known, the name and address of the last known employer should be provided.

Additionally, letting us know the following information about the other parent will expedite the processing of your case:

- social security number and date of birth;
- names and addresses of relatives and friends;
- names of banks or creditors such as utility companies;
- names of organizations, unions or clubs to which the other parent belongs; and
- places where the other parent spends free time.

If possible, also be prepared to submit copies of official documents like your divorce decree, the children's birth certificates, or a signed acknowledgment of paternity.

For the state fiscal year that ended Aug. 31, 2002, the Attorney General's Child Support Division collected $1.4 billion in child support, established paternity for 63,000 children, and obtained 55,000 court orders requiring non-custodial parents to pay child support. By all accounts, we are poised to do even better in 2003.

Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated child support team, the Attorney General's Child Support Division has made enormous strides over the last few years. But there is more work to be done. As your Attorney General, I will not be satisfied until all our children receive the support that is due them.

Information on this and other topics is available on the Attorney General's Web site at www.oag.state.tx.us.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

CHILD SUPPORT

An application for child support services can be obtained by:

- Visiting Child Support Interactive, located on the main Attorney General Web site at www.oag.state.tx.us

- Calling the 24-hour voice response system at (800)252-8014

Provide the following information about the other parent with your application:

Current address; Current (or last known) employer's name and address; social security number and date of birth; names and addresses of relatives and friends; names of banks or creditors such as utility companies; names of organizations, unions or clubs to which the other parent belongs; and, places where the other parent spends free time.

If possible, also be prepared to submit copies of official documents like your:

- divorce decree,

- children's birth certificates, and

- signed acknowledgment of paternity.

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

GREG ABBOTT