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DRL § 240

§ 240. Custody and child support; orders of protection

1. (a) In any action or proceeding brought (1) to annul a marriage or to declare the nullity of a void marriage, or (2) for a separation, or (3) for a divorce, or (4) to obtain, by a writ of habeas corpus or by petition and order to show cause, the custody of or right to visitation with any child of a marriage, the court shall require verification of the status of any child of the marriage with respect to such child's custody and support, including any prior orders, and shall enter orders for custody and support as, in the court's discretion, justice requires, having regard to the circumstances of the case and of the respective parties and to the best interests of the child and subject to the provisions of subdivision one-c of this section. Where either party to an action concerning custody of or a right to visitation with a child alleges in a sworn petition or complaint or sworn answer, cross-petition, counterclaim or other sworn responsive pleading that the other party has committed an act of domestic violence against the party making the allegation or a family or household member of either party, as such family or household member is defined in article eight of the family court act, and such allegations are proven by a preponderance of the evidence, the court must consider the effect of such domestic violence upon the best interests of the child, together with such other facts and circumstances as the court deems relevant in making a direction pursuant to this section. If a parent makes a good faith allegation based on a reasonable belief supported by facts that the child is the victim of child abuse, child neglect, or the effects of domestic violence, and if that parent acts lawfully and in good faith in response to that reasonable belief to protect the child or seek treatment for the child, then that parent shall not be deprived of custody, visitation or contact with the child, or restricted in custody, visitation or contact, based solely on that belief or the reasonable actions taken based on that belief. If an allegation that a child is abused is supported by a preponderance of the evidence, then the court shall consider such evidence of abuse in determining the visitation arrangement that is in the best interest of the child, and the court shall not place a child in the custody of a parent who presents a substantial risk of harm to that child. An order directing the payment of child support shall contain the social security numbers of the named parties. In all cases there shall be no prima facie right to the custody of the child in either parent. Such direction shall make provision for child support out of the property of either or both parents. The court shall make its award for child support pursuant to subdivision one-b of this section. Such direction may provide for reasonable visitation rights to the maternal and/or paternal grandparents of any child of the parties. Such direction as it applies to rights of visitation with a child remanded or placed in the care of a person, official, agency or institution pursuant to article ten of the family court act, or pursuant to an instrument approved under [section three hundred fifty-eight-a of the social services law](#), shall be enforceable pursuant to part eight of article ten of the family court act and [sections three hundred fifty-eight-a](#) and [three hundred eighty-four-a of the social services law](#) and other applicable provisions of law against any person having care and custody, or temporary care and custody, of the child. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any written application or motion to the court for the establishment, modification or enforcement of a child support obligation for persons not in receipt of public assistance and care must contain either a request for child support enforcement services which would authorize the collection of the support obligation by the immediate issuance of an income execution for support enforcement as provided for by this chapter, completed in the manner specified in [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#); or a statement that the applicant has applied for or is in receipt of such services; or a statement that the applicant knows of the availability of such services, has declined them at this time and where support enforcement services pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#) have been declined that the applicant understands that an income deduction order may be issued pursuant to [subdivision \(c\) of](#)

[section fifty-two hundred forty-two of the civil practice law and rules](#) without other child support enforcement services and that payment of an administrative fee may be required. The court shall provide a copy of any such request for child support enforcement services to the support collection unit of the appropriate social services district any time it directs payments to be made to such support collection unit. Additionally, the copy of any such request shall be accompanied by the name, address and social security number of the parties; the date and place of the parties' marriage; the name and date of birth of the child or children; and the name and address of the employers and income payors of the party from whom child support is sought or from the party ordered to pay child support to the other party. Such direction may require the payment of a sum or sums of money either directly to the custodial parent or to third persons for goods or services furnished for such child, or for both payments to the custodial parent and to such third persons; provided, however, that unless the party seeking or receiving child support has applied for or is receiving such services, the court shall not direct such payments to be made to the support collection unit, as established in [section one hundred eleven-h of the social services law](#). Every order directing the payment of support shall require that if either parent currently, or at any time in the future, has health insurance benefits available that may be extended or obtained to cover the child, such parent is required to exercise the option of additional coverage in favor of such child and execute and deliver to such person any forms, notices, documents or instruments necessary to assure timely payment of any health insurance claims for such child.

(b) As used in this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(1) "Health insurance benefits" means any medical, dental, optical and prescription drugs and health care services or other health care benefits that may be provided for a dependent through an employer or organization, including such employers or organizations which are self insured, or through other available health insurance or health care coverage plans.

(2) "Available health insurance benefits" means any health insurance benefits that are reasonable in cost and that are reasonably accessible to the person on whose behalf the petition is brought. Health insurance benefits that are not reasonable in cost or whose services are not reasonably accessible to such person, shall be considered unavailable.

(c) When the person on whose behalf the petition is brought is a child, the court shall consider the availability of health insurance benefits to all parties and shall take the following action to ensure that health insurance benefits are provided for the benefit of the child:

(1) Where the child is presently covered by health insurance benefits, the court shall direct in the order of support that such coverage be maintained, unless either parent requests the court to make a direction for health insurance benefits coverage pursuant to paragraph two of this subdivision.

(2) Where the child is not presently covered by health insurance benefits, the court shall make a determination as follows:

(i) If only one parent has available health insurance benefits, the court shall direct in the order of support that such parent provide health insurance benefits.

(ii) If both parents have available health insurance benefits the court shall direct in the order of support that either parent or both parents provide such health insurance. The court shall make such determination based on the circumstances of the case, including, but not limited to, the cost and comprehensiveness of the respective health insurance benefits and the best interests of the child.

(iii) If neither parent has available health insurance benefits, the court shall direct in the order of support that the custodial parent apply for the state's child health insurance plan pursuant to title one-A of article twenty-five of the public health law and the medical assistance program established pursuant to title eleven of article five of the social services law. If eligible for such coverage, the court shall prorate the cost of any premium or family contribution in accordance with paragraph (d) of this subdivision. A direction issued under this subdivision shall not limit

or alter either parent's obligation to obtain health insurance benefits at such time as they become available, as required pursuant to paragraph (a) of this subdivision.

(d) The cost of providing health insurance benefits pursuant to paragraph (c) of this subdivision shall be prorated between the parties in the same proportion as each parent's income is to the combined parental income. If the custodial parent is ordered to provide such benefits, the non-custodial parent's pro rata share of such costs shall be added to the basic support obligation. If the non-custodial parent is ordered to provide such benefits, the custodial parent's pro rata share of such costs shall be deducted from the basic support obligation. Where the court finds that such proration is unjust or inappropriate, the court shall:

(1) order the parties to pay such amount of the cost of health insurance benefits as the court finds just and appropriate;

(2) add or subtract such amount in the manner set forth in this subdivision; and

(3) set forth in the order the factors it considered, the amount of each party's share of the cost and the reason or reasons the court did not order such pro rata apportionment.

(e) The court shall provide in the order of support that the legally responsible relative immediately notify the other party, or the other party and the support collection unit when the order is issued on behalf of a child in receipt of public assistance and care or in receipt of services pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#), of any change in health insurance benefits, including any termination of benefits, change in the health insurance benefit carrier, premium, or extent and availability of existing or new benefits.

(f) Where the court determines that health insurance benefits are available, the court shall provide in the order of support that the legally responsible relative immediately enroll the eligible dependents named in the order who are otherwise eligible for such benefits without regard to any seasonal enrollment restrictions. Such order shall further direct the legally responsible relative to maintain such benefits as long as they remain available to such relative. Such order shall further direct the legally responsible relative to assign all insurance reimbursement payments for health care expenses incurred for his or her eligible dependents to the provider of such services or the party actually having incurred and satisfied such expenses, as appropriate.

(g) When the court issues an order of child support or combined child and spousal support on behalf of persons in receipt of public assistance and care or in receipt of services pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#), such order shall further direct that the provision of health care benefits shall be immediately enforced pursuant to [section fifty-two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules](#).

(h) When the court issues an order of child support or combined child and spousal support on behalf of persons other than those in receipt of public assistance and care or in receipt of services pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#), the court shall also issue a separate order which shall include the necessary direction to ensure the order's characterization as a qualified medical child support order as defined by section six hundred nine of the employee retirement income security act of 1974 ([29 USC 1169](#)). Such order shall: (i) clearly state that it creates or recognizes the existence of the right of the named dependent to be enrolled and to receive benefits for which the legally responsible relative is eligible under the available group health plans, and shall clearly specify the name, social security number and mailing address of the legally responsible relative, and of each dependent to be covered by the order; (ii) provide a clear description of the type of coverage to be provided by the group health plan to each such dependent or the manner in which the type of coverage is to be determined; and (iii) specify the period of time to which the order applies. The court shall not require the group health plan to provide any type or form of benefit or option not otherwise provided under the group health plan except to the extent necessary to meet the requirements of a law relating to medical child support described in [section one thousand three hundred and ninety-six g of title forty-two of the United States code](#).

(i) Upon a finding that a legally responsible relative wilfully failed to obtain health insurance benefits in violation of a court order, such relative will be presumptively liable for all health care expenses incurred on behalf of such dependents from the first date such dependents were eligible to be enrolled to receive health insurance benefits after the issuance of the order of support directing the acquisition of such coverage.

(j) The order shall be effective as of the date of the application therefor, and any retroactive amount of child support due shall be support arrears/past due support and shall, except as provided for herein, be paid in one lump sum or periodic sums, as the court shall direct, taking into account any amount of temporary support which has been paid. In addition, such retroactive child support shall be enforceable in any manner provided by law including, but not limited to, an execution for support enforcement pursuant to [subdivision \(b\) of section fifty-two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules](#). When a child receiving support is a public assistance recipient, or the order of support is being enforced or is to be enforced pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#), the court shall establish the amount of retroactive child support and notify the parties that such amount shall be enforced by the support collection unit pursuant to an execution for support enforcement as provided for in [subdivision \(b\) of section fifty-two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules](#), or in such periodic payments as would have been authorized had such an execution been issued. In such case, the courts shall not direct the schedule of repayment of retroactive support. Where such direction is for child support and paternity has been established by a voluntary acknowledgement of paternity as defined in [section forty-one hundred thirty-five-b of the public health law](#), the court shall inquire of the parties whether the acknowledgement has been duly filed, and unless satisfied that it has been so filed shall require the clerk of the court to file such acknowledgement with the appropriate registrar within five business days. Such direction may be made in the final judgment in such action or proceeding, or by one or more orders from time to time before or subsequent to final judgment, or by both such order or orders and the final judgment. Such direction may be made notwithstanding that the court for any reason whatsoever, other than lack of jurisdiction, refuses to grant the relief requested in the action or proceeding. Any order or judgment made as in this section provided may combine in one lump sum any amount payable to the custodial parent under this section with any amount payable to such parent under [section two hundred thirty-six](#) of this article. Upon the application of either parent, or of any other person or party having the care, custody and control of such child pursuant to such judgment or order, after such notice to the other party, parties or persons having such care, custody and control and given in such manner as the court shall direct, the court may annul or modify any such direction, whether made by order or final judgment, or in case no such direction shall have been made in the final judgment may, with respect to any judgment of annulment or declaring the nullity of a void marriage rendered on or after September first, nineteen hundred forty, or any judgment of separation or divorce whenever rendered, amend the judgment by inserting such direction. Subject to the provisions of [section two hundred forty-four](#) of this article, no such modification or annulment shall reduce or annul arrears accrued prior to the making of such application unless the defaulting party shows good cause for failure to make application for relief from the judgment or order directing such payment prior to the accrual of such arrears. Such modification may increase such child support nunc pro tunc as of the date of application based on newly discovered evidence. Any retroactive amount of child support due shall be support arrears/past due support and shall be paid in one lump sum or periodic sums, as the court shall direct, taking into account any amount of temporary child support which has been paid. In addition, such retroactive child support shall be enforceable in any manner provided by law including, but not limited to, an execution for support enforcement pursuant to [subdivision \(b\) of section fifty-two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules](#).

1-a. In any proceeding brought pursuant to this section to determine the custody or visitation of minors, a report made to the statewide central register of child abuse and maltreatment, pursuant to title six of article six of the social services law, or a portion thereof, which is otherwise admissible as a business record pursuant to [rule forty-five hundred eighteen of the civil practice law and rules](#) shall not be admissible in evidence, notwithstanding such rule, unless an investigation of such report conducted pursuant to title six of article six of the social services law has determined that there is some credible evidence of the alleged abuse or maltreatment and that the subject of the report has been notified that the report is indicated. In addition, if such report has been reviewed by the state commissioner of social services or his designee and has been determined to be unfounded, it shall not be admissible in evidence. If such report has been so reviewed and has been amended to delete any finding, each such deleted finding shall not be admissible. If the state commissioner of social services or his designee has amended the report to add any new finding, each such new finding, together with any portion of the original report not deleted by the commissioner or his designee, shall be admissible if it meets the other requirements of this subdivision and is otherwise admissible as a business record. If such a report, or portion thereof, is admissible in evidence but is uncorroborated, it shall not be sufficient to make a fact finding of abuse or maltreatment in such proceeding. Any other evidence tending to support the reliability of such report shall be sufficient corroboration.

1-b. (a) The court shall make its award for child support pursuant to the provisions of this subdivision. The court may vary from the amount of the basic child support obligation determined pursuant to paragraph (c) of this subdivision only in accordance with paragraph (f) of this subdivision.

(b) For purposes of this subdivision, the following definitions shall be used:

(1) "Basic child support obligation" shall mean the sum derived by adding the amounts determined by the application of subparagraphs two and three of paragraph (c) of this subdivision except as increased pursuant to subparagraphs four, five, six and seven of such paragraph.

(2) "Child support" shall mean a sum to be paid pursuant to court order or decree by either or both parents or pursuant to a valid agreement between the parties for care, maintenance and education of any unemancipated child under the age of twenty-one years.

(3) "Child support percentage" shall mean:

(i) seventeen percent of the combined parental income for one child;

(ii) twenty-five percent of the combined parental income for two children;

(iii) twenty-nine percent of the combined parental income for three children;

(iv) thirty-one percent of the combined parental income for four children; and

(v) no less than thirty-five percent of the combined parental income for five or more children.

(4) "Combined parental income" shall mean the sum of the income of both parents.

(5) "Income" shall mean, but shall not be limited to, the sum of the amounts determined by the application of clauses (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) of this subparagraph reduced by the amount determined by the application of clause (vii) of this subparagraph:

(i) gross (total) income as should have been or should be reported in the most recent federal income tax return. If an individual files his/her federal income tax return as a married person filing jointly, such person shall be required to prepare a form, sworn to under penalty of law, disclosing his/her gross income individually;

(ii) to the extent not already included in gross income in clause (i) of this subparagraph, investment income reduced by sums expended in connection with such investment;

(iii) to the extent not already included in gross income in clauses (i) and (ii) of this subparagraph, the amount of income or compensation voluntarily deferred and income received, if any, from the following sources:

(A) workers' compensation,

(B) disability benefits,

- (C) unemployment insurance benefits,
- (D) social security benefits,
- (E) veterans benefits,
- (F) pensions and retirement benefits,
- (G) fellowships and stipends, and
- (H) annuity payments;
- (iv) at the discretion of the court, the court may attribute or impute income from, such other resources as may be available to the parent, including, but not limited to:
 - (A) non-income producing assets,
 - (B) meals, lodging, memberships, automobiles or other perquisites that are provided as part of compensation for employment to the extent that such perquisites constitute expenditures for personal use, or which expenditures directly or indirectly⁴ confer personal economic benefits,
 - (C) fringe benefits provided as part of compensation for employment, and
 - (D) money, goods, or services provided by relatives and friends;
- (v) an amount imputed as income based upon the parent's former resources or income, if the court determines that a parent has reduced resources or income in order to reduce or avoid the parent's obligation for child support;
- (vi) to the extent not already included in gross income in clauses (i) and (ii) of this subparagraph, the following self-employment deductions attributable to self-employment carried on by the taxpayer:
 - (A) any depreciation deduction greater than depreciation calculated on a straight-line basis for the purpose of determining business income or investment credits, and
 - (B) entertainment and travel allowances deducted from business income to the extent said allowances reduce personal expenditures;
- (vii) the following shall be deducted from income prior to applying the provisions of paragraph (c) of this subdivision:
 - (A) unreimbursed employee business expenses except to the extent said expenses reduce personal expenditures,
 - (B) alimony or maintenance actually paid to a spouse not a party to the instant action pursuant to court order or validly executed written agreement,
 - (C) alimony or maintenance actually paid or to be paid to a spouse that is a party to the instant action pursuant to an existing court order or contained in the order to be entered by the court, or pursuant to a validly executed written agreement, provided the order or agreement provides for a specific adjustment, in accordance with this subdivision, in the amount of child support payable upon the termination of alimony or maintenance to such spouse,
 - (D) child support actually paid pursuant to court order or written agreement on behalf of any child for whom the parent has a legal duty of support and who is not subject to the instant action,
 - (E) public assistance,
 - (F) supplemental security income,
 - (G) New York city or Yonkers income or earnings taxes actually paid, and
 - (H) federal insurance contributions act (FICA) taxes actually paid.
- (6) "Self-support reserve" shall mean one hundred thirty-five percent of the poverty income guidelines amount for a single person as reported by the federal department of health and human services. For the calendar year nineteen hundred eighty-nine, the self-support reserve shall be eight thousand sixty-five dollars. On March first of each year, the self-support reserve shall be revised to reflect the annual updating of the poverty income guidelines as reported by the federal department of health and human services for a single person household.
- (c) The amount of the basic child support obligation shall be determined in accordance with the provision of this paragraph:
 - (1) The court shall determine the combined parental income.

(2) The court shall multiply the combined parental income up to eighty thousand dollars by the appropriate child support percentage and such amount shall be prorated in the same proportion as each parent's income is to the combined parental income.

(3) Where the combined parental income exceeds the dollar amount set forth in subparagraph two of this paragraph, the court shall determine the amount of child support for the amount of the combined parental income in excess of such dollar amount through consideration of the factors set forth in paragraph (f) of this subdivision and/or the child support percentage.

(4) Where the custodial parent is working, or receiving elementary or secondary education, or higher education or vocational training which the court determines will lead to employment, and incurs child care expenses as a result thereof, the court shall determine reasonable child care expenses and such child care expenses, where incurred, shall be prorated in the same proportion as each parent's income is to the combined parental income. Each parent's pro rata share of the child care expenses shall be separately stated and added to the sum of subparagraphs two and three of this paragraph.

(5) The court shall prorate each parent's share of future reasonable health care expenses of the child not covered by insurance in the same proportion as each parent's income is to the combined parental income. The non-custodial parent's pro rata share of such health care expenses shall be paid in a manner determined by the court, including direct payment to the health care provider.

(6) Where the court determines that the custodial parent is seeking work and incurs child care expenses as a result thereof, the court may determine reasonable child care expenses and may apportion the same between the custodial and non-custodial parent. The non-custodial parent's share of such expenses shall be separately stated and paid in a manner determined by the court.

(7) Where the court determines, having regard for the circumstances of the case and of the respective parties and in the best interests of the child, and as justice requires, that the present or future provision of post-secondary, private, special, or enriched education for the child is appropriate, the court may award educational expenses. The non-custodial parent shall pay educational expenses, as awarded, in a manner determined by the court, including direct payment to the educational provider.

(d) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (c) of this subdivision, where the annual amount of the basic child support obligation would reduce the non-custodial parent's income below the poverty income guidelines amount for a single person as reported by the federal department of health and human services, the basic child support obligation shall be twenty-five dollars per month or the difference between the non-custodial parent's income and the self-support reserve, whichever is greater. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (c) of this subdivision, where the annual amount of the basic child support obligation would reduce the non-custodial parent's income below the self-support reserve but not below the poverty income guidelines amount for a single person as reported by the federal department of health and human services, the basic child support obligation shall be fifty dollars per month or the difference between the non-custodial parent's income and the self-support reserve, whichever is greater.

(e) Where a parent is or may be entitled to receive non-recurring payments from extraordinary sources not otherwise considered as income pursuant to this section, including but not limited to:

- (1) Life insurance policies;
- (2) Discharges of indebtedness;
- (3) Recovery of bad debts and delinquency amounts;
- (4) Gifts and inheritances; and
- (5) Lottery winnings,

the court, in accordance with paragraphs (c), (d) and (f) of this subdivision may allocate a proportion of the same to child support, and such amount shall be paid in a manner determined by the court.

(f) The court shall calculate the basic child support obligation, and the non-custodial parent's pro rata share of the basic child support obligation. Unless the court finds that the non-custodial parents'¹ pro-rata share of the basic child support obligation is unjust or inappropriate, which finding shall be based upon consideration of the following factors:

- (1) The financial resources of the custodial and non-custodial parent, and those of the child;
- (2) The physical and emotional health of the child and his/her special needs and aptitudes;
- (3) The standard of living the child would have enjoyed had the marriage or household not been dissolved;
- (4) The tax consequences to the parties;
- (5) The non-monetary contributions that the parents will make toward the care and well-being of the child;
- (6) The educational needs of either parent;
- (7) A determination that the gross income of one parent is substantially less than the other parent's gross income;
- (8) The needs of the children of the non-custodial parent for whom the non-custodial parent is providing support who are not subject to the instant action and whose support has not been deducted from income pursuant to subclause (D) of clause (vii) of subparagraph five of paragraph (b) of this subdivision, and the financial resources of any person obligated to support such children, provided, however, that this factor may apply only if the resources available to support such children are less than the resources available to support the children who are subject to the instant action;
- (9) Provided that the child is not on public assistance (i) extraordinary expenses incurred by the non-custodial parent in exercising visitation, or (ii) expenses incurred by the non-custodial parent in extended visitation provided that the custodial parent's expenses are substantially reduced as a result thereof; and
- (10) Any other factors the court determines are relevant in each case, the court shall order the non-custodial parent to pay his or her pro rata share of the basic child support obligation, and may order the non-custodial parent to pay an amount pursuant to paragraph (e) of this subdivision.

(g) Where the court finds that the non-custodial parent's pro rata share of the basic child support obligation is unjust or inappropriate, the court shall order the non-custodial parent to pay such amount of child support as the court finds just and appropriate, and the court shall set forth, in a written order, the factors it considered; the amount of each party's pro rata share of the basic child support obligation; and the reasons that the court did not order the basic child support obligation. Such written order may not be waived by either party or counsel; provided, however, and notwithstanding any other provision of law, the court shall not find that the non-custodial parent's pro rata share of such obligation is unjust or inappropriate on the basis that such share exceeds the portion of a public assistance grant which is attributable to a child or children. In no instance shall the court order child support below twenty-five dollars per month. Where the non-custodial parent's income is less than or equal to the poverty income guidelines amount for a single person as reported by the federal department of health and human services, unpaid child support arrears in excess of five hundred dollars shall not accrue.

(h) A validly executed agreement or stipulation voluntarily entered into between the parties after the effective date of this subdivision presented to the court for incorporation in an order or judgment shall include a provision stating that the parties have been advised of the provisions of this subdivision, and that the basic child support obligation provided for therein would presumptively result in the correct amount of child support to be awarded. In the event that such agreement or stipulation deviates from the basic child support obligation, the agreement or

stipulation must specify the amount that such basic child support obligation would have been and the reason or reasons that such agreement or stipulation does not provide for payment of that amount. Such provision may not be waived by either party or counsel. Nothing contained in this subdivision shall be construed to alter the rights of the parties to voluntarily enter into validly executed agreements or stipulations which deviate from the basic child support obligation provided such agreements or stipulations comply with the provisions of this paragraph. The court shall, however, retain discretion with respect to child support pursuant to this section. Any court order or judgment incorporating a validly executed agreement or stipulation which deviates from the basic child support obligation shall set forth the court's reasons for such deviation.

(i) Where either or both parties are unrepresented, the court shall not enter an order or judgment other than a temporary order pursuant to [section two hundred thirty-seven](#) of this article, that includes a provision for child support unless the unrepresented party or parties have received a copy of the child support standards chart promulgated by the commissioner of social services pursuant to [subdivision two of section one hundred eleven-i of the social services law](#). Where either party is in receipt of child support enforcement services through the local social services district, the local social services district child support enforcement unit shall advise such party of the amount derived from application of the child support percentage and that such amount serves as a starting point for the determination of the child support award, and shall provide such party with a copy of the child support standards chart. In no instance shall the court approve any voluntary support agreement or compromise that includes an amount for child support less than twenty-five dollars per month.

(j) In addition to financial disclosure required in [section two hundred thirty-six](#) of this article, the court may require that the income and/or expenses of either party be verified with documentation including, but not limited to, past and present income tax returns, employer statements, pay stubs, corporate, business, or partnership books and records, corporate and business tax returns, and receipts for expenses or such other means of verification as the court determines appropriate. Nothing herein shall affect any party's right to pursue discovery pursuant to this chapter, the civil practice law and rules, or the family court act.

(k) When a party has defaulted and/or the court is otherwise presented with insufficient evidence to determine gross income, the court shall order child support based upon the needs or standard of living of the child, whichever is greater. Such order may be retroactively modified upward, without a showing of change in circumstances.

(l) In any action or proceeding for modification of an order of child support existing prior to the effective date of this paragraph, brought pursuant to this article, the child support standards set forth in this subdivision shall not constitute a change of circumstances warranting modification of such support order; provided, however, that (1) where the circumstances warrant modification of such order, or (2) where any party objects to an adjusted child support order made or proposed at the direction of the support collection unit pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-h](#) or [one hundred eleven-n of the social services law](#), and the court is reviewing the current order of child support, such standards shall be applied by the court in its determination with regard to the request for modification, or disposition of an objection to an adjusted child support order made or proposed by a support collection unit. In applying such standards, when the order to be modified incorporates by reference or merges with a validly executed separation agreement or stipulation of settlement, the court may consider, in addition to the factors set forth in paragraph (f) of this subdivision, the provisions of such agreement or stipulation concerning property distribution, distributive award and/or maintenance in determining whether the amount calculated by using the standards would be unjust or inappropriate.

1-c. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, no court shall make an order providing for visitation or custody to a person who has been convicted of murder in the

first or second degree in this state, or convicted of an offense in another jurisdiction which, if committed in this state, would constitute either murder in the first or second degree, of a parent, legal custodian, legal guardian, sibling, half-sibling or step-sibling of any child who is the subject of the proceeding. Pending determination of a petition for visitation or custody, such child shall not visit and no person shall visit with such child present, such person who has been convicted of murder in the first or second degree in this state, or convicted of and² offense in another jurisdiction which, if committed in this state, would constitute either murder in the first or second degree, of a parent, legal custodian, legal guardian, sibling, half-sibling or step-sibling of a child who is the subject of the proceeding without the consent of such child's custodian or legal guardian.

(b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this subdivision a court may order visitation or custody where:

(i) (A) such child is of suitable age to signify assent and such child assents to such visitation or custody; or

(B) if such child is not of suitable age to signify assent, the child's custodian or legal guardian assents to such order; or

(C) the person who has been convicted of murder in the first or second degree, or an offense in another jurisdiction which if committed in this state, would constitute either murder in the first or second degree, can prove by a preponderance of the evidence that:

(1) he or she, or a family or household member of either party, was a victim of domestic violence by the victim of such murder; and

(2) the domestic violence was causally related to the commission of such murder; and

(ii) the court finds that such visitation or custody is in the best interests of the child.

(c) For the purpose of making a determination pursuant to clause (C) of subparagraph (i) of paragraph (b) of this subdivision, the court shall not be bound by the findings of fact, conclusions of law or ultimate conclusion as determined by the proceedings leading to the conviction of murder in the first or second degree in this state or of an offense in another jurisdiction which, if committed in this state, would constitute murder in either the first or second degree, of a parent, legal guardian, legal custodian, sibling, half-sibling or step-sibling of a child who is the subject of the proceeding. In all proceedings under this section, a law guardian shall be appointed for the child.

2. (a)³ An order directing payment of money for child support shall be enforceable pursuant to [section fifty-two hundred forty-one](#) or [fifty-two hundred forty-two of the civil practice law and rules](#) or in any other manner provided by law. Such orders or judgments for child support and maintenance shall also be enforceable pursuant to article fifty-two of the civil practice law and rules upon a debtor's default as such term is defined in [paragraph seven of subdivision \(a\) of section fifty-two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules](#). The establishment of a default shall be subject to the procedures established for the determination of a mistake of fact for income executions pursuant to [subdivision \(e\) of section fifty-two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules](#). For the purposes of enforcement of child support orders or combined spousal and child support orders pursuant to [section five thousand two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules](#), a "default" shall be deemed to include amounts arising from retroactive support.

b. (1) When a child receiving support is a public assistance recipient, or the order of support is being enforced or is to be enforced pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#), the court shall direct that the child support payments be made to the support collection unit. Unless (i) the court finds and sets forth in writing the reasons that there is good cause not to require immediate income withholding; or (ii) when the child is not in receipt of public assistance, a written agreement providing for an alternative arrangement has been reached between the parties, the support collection unit shall issue an income execution immediately for child support or combined maintenance and child support, and may issue an

execution for medical support enforcement in accordance with the provisions of the order of support. Such written agreement may include an oral stipulation made on the record resulting in a written order. For purposes of this paragraph, good cause shall mean substantial harm to the debtor. The absence of an arrearage or the mere issuance of an income execution shall not constitute good cause. When an immediate income execution or an execution for medical support enforcement is issued by the support collection unit, such income execution shall be issued pursuant to [section five thousand two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules](#), except that the provisions thereof relating to mistake of fact, default and any other provisions which are not relevant to the issuance of an income execution pursuant to this paragraph shall not apply; provided, however, that if the support collection unit makes an error in the issuance of an income execution pursuant to this paragraph, and such error is to the detriment of the debtor, the support collection unit shall have thirty days after notification by the debtor to correct the error. Where permitted under federal law and where the record of the proceedings contains such information, such order shall include on its face the social security number and the name and address of the employer, if any, of the person chargeable with support; provided, however, that failure to comply with this requirement shall not invalidate such order. When the court determines that there is good cause not to immediately issue an income execution or when the parties agree to an alternative arrangement as provided in this paragraph, the court shall provide expressly in the order of support that the support collection unit shall not issue an immediate income execution. Notwithstanding any such order, the support collection unit shall issue an income execution for support enforcement when the debtor defaults on the support obligation, as defined in [section five thousand two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules](#).

(2) When the court issues an order of child support or combined child and spousal support on behalf of persons other than those in receipt of public assistance or in receipt of services pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#), the court shall issue an income deduction order pursuant to [subdivision \(c\) of section five thousand two hundred forty-two of the civil practice law and rules](#) at the same time it issues the order of support. The court shall enter the income deduction order unless the court finds and sets forth in writing (i) the reasons that there is good cause not to require immediate income withholding; or (ii) that an agreement providing for an alternative arrangement has been reached between the parties. Such agreement may include a written agreement or an oral stipulation, made on the record, that results in a written order. For purposes of this paragraph, good cause shall mean substantial harm to the debtor. The absence of an arrearage or the mere issuance of an income deduction order shall not constitute good cause. Where permitted under federal law and where the record of the proceedings contains such information, such order shall include on its face the social security number and the name and address of the employer, if any, of the person chargeable with support; provided, however, that failure to comply with this requirement shall not invalidate the order. When the court determines that there is good cause not to issue an income deduction order immediately or when the parties agree to an alternative arrangement as provided in this paragraph, the court shall provide expressly in the order of support the basis for its decision and shall not issue an income deduction order.

c. Any order of support issued on behalf of a child in receipt of family assistance or child support enforcement services pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#) shall be subject to review and adjustment by the support collection unit pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-n of the social services law](#). Such review and adjustment shall be in addition to any other activities undertaken by the support collection unit relating to the establishment, modification, and enforcement of support orders payable to such unit.

3. Order of protection. a. The court may make an order of protection in assistance or as a condition of any other order made under this section. The order of protection may set forth

reasonable conditions of behavior to be observed for a specified time by any party. Such an order may require any party:

- (1) to stay away from the home, school, business or place of employment of the child, other parent or any other party, and to stay away from any other specific location designated by the court;
- (2) to permit a parent, or a person entitled to visitation by a court order or a separation agreement, to visit the child at stated periods;
- (3) to refrain from committing a family offense, as defined in [subdivision one of section 530.11 of the criminal procedure law](#), or any criminal offense against the child or against the other parent or against any person to whom custody of the child is awarded or from harassing, intimidating or threatening such persons;
- (4) to permit a designated party to enter the residence during a specified period of time in order to remove personal belongings not in issue in a proceeding or action under this chapter or the family court act; or
- (5) to refrain from acts of commission or omission that create an unreasonable risk to the health, safety or welfare of a child.
- (6) to pay the reasonable counsel fees and disbursements involved in obtaining or enforcing the order of the person who is protected by such order if such order is issued or enforced.
- (7) to refrain from intentionally injuring or killing, without justification, any companion animal the respondent knows to be owned, possessed, leased, kept or held by the person protected by the order or a minor child residing in such person's household. "Companion animal," as used in this section, shall have the same meaning as in [subdivision five of section three hundred fifty of the agriculture and markets law](#).
- (8) to observe such other conditions as are necessary to further the purposes of protection.

b. An order of protection entered pursuant to this subdivision shall bear in a conspicuous manner, on the front page of said order, the language "Order of protection issued pursuant to section two hundred forty of the domestic relations law". The absence of such language shall not affect the validity of such order. The presentation of a copy of such an order to any peace officer acting pursuant to his or her special duties, or police officer, shall constitute authority, for that officer to arrest a person when that person has violated the terms of such an order, and bring such person before the court and, otherwise, so far as lies within the officer's power, to aid in securing the protection such order was intended to afford.

c. An order of protection entered pursuant to this subdivision may be made in the final judgment in any matrimonial action or in a proceeding to obtain custody of or visitation with any child under this section, or by one or more orders from time to time before or subsequent to final judgment, or by both such order or orders and the final judgment. The order of protection may remain in effect after entry of a final matrimonial judgment and during the minority of any child whose custody or visitation is the subject of a provision of a final judgment or any order. An order of protection may be entered notwithstanding that the court for any reason whatsoever, other than lack of jurisdiction, refuses to grant the relief requested in the action or proceeding.

d. The chief administrator of the courts shall promulgate appropriate uniform temporary orders of protection and orders of protection forms, applicable to proceedings under this article, to be used throughout the state. Such forms shall be promulgated and developed in a manner to ensure the compatibility of such forms with the statewide computerized registry established pursuant to [section two hundred twenty-one-a of the executive law](#).

e. No order of protection may direct any party to observe conditions of behavior unless: (i) the party requesting the order of protection has served and filed an action, proceeding, counterclaim or written motion and, (ii) the court has made a finding on the record that such party is entitled to issuance of the order of protection which may result from a judicial finding of fact, judicial acceptance of an admission by the party against whom the order was issued or judicial

finding that the party against whom the order is issued has given knowing, intelligent and voluntary consent to its issuance. The provisions of this subdivision shall not preclude the court from issuing a temporary order of protection upon the court's own motion or where a motion for such relief is made to the court, for good cause shown.

f. In addition to the foregoing provisions, the court may issue an order, pursuant to [section two hundred twenty-seven-c of the real property law](#), authorizing the party for whose benefit any order of protection has been issued to terminate a lease or rental agreement pursuant to [section two hundred twenty-seven-c of the real property law](#).

Any party moving for a temporary order of protection pursuant to this subdivision during hours when the court is open shall be entitled to file such motion or pleading containing such prayer for emergency relief on the same day that such person first appears at such court, and a hearing on the motion or portion of the pleading requesting such emergency relief shall be held on the same day or the next day that the court is in session following the filing of such motion or pleading.

Upon issuance of an order of protection or temporary order of protection or upon a violation of such order, the court may make an order in accordance with [section eight hundred forty-two-a of the family court act](#) directing the surrender of firearms, revoking or suspending a party's firearms license, and/or directing that such party be ineligible to receive a firearms license.

Upon issuance of an order of protection pursuant to this section or upon a finding of a violation thereof, the court also may direct payment of restitution in an amount not to exceed ten thousand dollars in accordance with subdivision (e) of section eight hundred forty-one of such act; provided, however, that in no case shall an order of restitution be issued where the court determines that the party against whom the order would be issued has already compensated the injured party or where such compensation is incorporated in a final judgment or settlement of the action.

3-a. Service of order of protection. If a temporary order of protection has been issued upon a default, unless the party requesting the order states on the record that she or he will arrange for other means for service or deliver the order to a peace or police officer directly for service, the court shall immediately deliver a copy of the temporary order of protection or order of protection to a peace officer, acting pursuant to his or her special duties and designated by the court, or to a police officer as defined in paragraph (b) or (d) of [subdivision thirty-four of section 1.20 of the criminal procedure law](#), or, in the city of New York, to a designated representative of the police department of the city of New York. Any peace or police officer or designated person receiving a temporary order of protection or an order of protection as provided hereunder shall serve or provide for the service thereof together with any associated papers that may be served simultaneously, at any address designated therewith, including the summons and petition or complaint if not previously served. Service of such temporary order of protection or order of protection and associated papers shall, insofar as practicable, be achieved promptly. An officer or designated person obliged to perform service pursuant to this subdivision, and his or her employer, shall not be liable for damages resulting from failure to achieve service where, having made a reasonable effort, such officer or designated person is unable to locate and serve the temporary order of protection or order of protection at any address provided by the party requesting the order. A statement subscribed by the officer or designated person, and affirmed by him or her to be true under the penalties of perjury, stating the papers served, the date, time, address or in the event there is no address, place, and manner of service, the name and a brief physical description of the party served, shall be proof of service of the summons, petition and temporary order of protection or order of protection. When the temporary order of protection or order of protection and other papers, if any, have been served, such officer or designated person shall provide the court with an affirmation, certificate or affidavit of service and shall provide notification of the date and time of such service to the statewide computer registry established pursuant to [section two hundred twenty-one-a of the executive law](#).

3-b. Emergency powers; local criminal court. If the court that issued an order of protection or temporary order of protection under this section or warrant in connection thereto is not in session when an arrest is made for an alleged violation of the order or upon a warrant issued in connection with such violation, the arrested person shall be brought before a local criminal court in the county of arrest or in the county in which such warrant is returnable pursuant to article one hundred twenty of the criminal procedure law and arraigned by such court. Such local criminal court shall order the commitment of the arrested person to the custody of the sheriff, admit to, fix or accept bail, or release the arrested person on his or her recognizance pending appearance in the court that issued the order of protection, temporary order of protection or warrant. In making such order, such local criminal court shall consider the bail recommendation, if any, made by the supreme or family court as indicated on the warrant or certificate of warrant. Unless the petitioner or complainant requests otherwise, the court, in addition to scheduling further criminal proceedings, if any, regarding such alleged family offense or violation allegation, shall make such matter returnable in the supreme or family court, as applicable, on the next day such court is in session.

3-c. Orders of protection; filing and enforcement of out-of-state orders. A valid order of protection or temporary order of protection issued by a court of competent jurisdiction in another state, territorial or tribal jurisdiction shall be accorded full faith and credit and enforced as if it were issued by a court within the state for as long as the order remains in effect in the issuing jurisdiction in accordance with [sections two thousand two hundred sixty-five](#) and [two thousand two hundred sixty-six of title eighteen of the United States Code](#).

a. An order issued by a court of competent jurisdiction in another state, territorial or tribal jurisdiction shall be deemed valid if:

(1) the issuing court had personal jurisdiction over the parties and over the subject matter under the law of the issuing jurisdiction;

(2) the person against whom the order was issued had reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard prior to issuance of the order; provided, however, that if the order was a temporary order of protection issued in the absence of such person, that notice had been given and that an opportunity to be heard had been provided within a reasonable period of time after the issuance of the order; and

(3) in the case of orders of protection or temporary orders of protection issued against both a petitioner and respondent, the order or portion thereof sought to be enforced was supported by: (i) a pleading requesting such order, including, but not limited to, a petition, cross-petition or counterclaim; and (ii) a judicial finding that the requesting party is entitled to the issuance of the order, which may result from a judicial finding of fact, judicial acceptance of an admission by the party against whom the order was issued or judicial finding that the party against whom the order was issued had given⁴ knowing, intelligent and voluntary consent to its issuance.

b. Notwithstanding the provisions of article fifty-four of the civil practice law and rules, an order of protection or temporary order of protection issued by a court of competent jurisdiction in another state, territorial or tribal jurisdiction, accompanied by a sworn affidavit that upon information and belief such order is in effect as written and has not been vacated or modified, may be filed without fee with the clerk of the court, who shall transmit information regarding such order to the statewide registry of orders of protection and warrants established pursuant to [section two hundred twenty-one-a of the executive law](#); provided, however, that such filing and registry entry shall not be required for enforcement of the order.

4. One-time adjustment of child support orders issued prior to September fifteenth, nineteen hundred eighty-nine. Any party to a child support order issued prior to September fifteenth, nineteen hundred eighty-nine on the behalf of a child in receipt of public assistance or child support services pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#) may request that the support collection unit undertake one review of the order for adjustment purposes pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-h of the social services law](#). A hearing on the adjustment

of such order shall be granted upon the objection of either party pursuant to the provisions of this section. An order shall be adjusted if as of the date of the support collection unit's review of the correct amount of child support as calculated pursuant to the provisions of this section would deviate by at least ten percent from the child support ordered in the current order of support. Additionally, a new order shall be issued upon a showing that the current order of support does not provide for the health care needs of the child through insurance or otherwise. Eligibility of the child for medical assistance shall not relieve any obligation the parties otherwise have to provide for the health care needs of the child. The support collection unit's review of a child support order shall be made on notice to all parties to the current support order. Nothing herein shall be deemed in any way to limit, restrict, expand or impair the rights of any party to file for a modification of a child support order as is otherwise provided by law.

(1) Upon mailing of an adjustment finding and where appropriate a proposed order in conformity with such finding filed by either party or by the support collection unit, a party shall have thirty-five days from the date of mailing to submit to the court identified thereon specific written objections to such finding and proposed order.

(a) If specific written objections are submitted by either party or by the support collection unit, a hearing shall be scheduled by the court on notice to the parties and the support collection unit, who then shall have the right to be heard by the court and to offer evidence in support of or in opposition to adjustment of the support order.

(b) The party filing the specific written objections shall bear the burden of going forward and the burden of proof; provided, however, that if the support collection unit has failed to provide the documentation and information required by [subdivision fourteen of section one hundred eleven-h of the social services law](#), the court shall first require the support collection unit to furnish such documents and information to the parties and the court.

(c) If the court finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the specific written objections have been proven, the court shall recalculate or readjust the proposed adjusted order accordingly or, for good cause, shall remand the order to the support collection unit for submission of a new proposed adjusted order. Any readjusted order so issued by the court or resubmitted by the support collection unit after a remand by the court shall be effective as of the date the proposed adjusted order would have been effective had no specific written objections been filed.

(d) If the court finds that the specific written objections have not been proven by a preponderance of the evidence, the court shall immediately issue the adjusted order as submitted by the support collection unit, which shall be effective as of the date the order would have been effective had no specific written exceptions been filed.

(e) If the court receives no specific written objections to the support order within thirty-five days of the mailing of the proposed order the clerk of the court shall immediately enter the order without further review, modification, or other prior action by the court or any judge or support magistrate thereof, and the clerk shall immediately transmit copies of the order of support to the parties and to the support collection unit.

(2) A motion to vacate an order of support adjusted pursuant to this section may be made no later than forty-five days after an adjusted support order is executed by the court where no specific written objections to the proposed order have been timely received by the court. Such motion shall be granted only upon a determination by the court issuing such order that personal jurisdiction was not timely obtained over the moving party.

5. [As added by [L.1997, c. 398, § 6](#). See, also, subd. 5 below.] Provision of child support orders to the state case registry. The court shall direct that a copy of any child support or combined child and spousal support order issued by the court on or after the first day of October, nineteen hundred ninety-eight, in any proceeding under this section be provided promptly to the state case registry established pursuant to [subdivision four-a of section one hundred eleven-b of the social services law](#).

5. [As added by [L.1997, c. 398, § 103](#). See, also, subd.5 above.] On-going cost of living adjustment of child support orders issued prior to September fifteenth, nineteen hundred eighty-nine. Any party to a child support order issued prior to September fifteenth, nineteen hundred eighty-nine on the behalf of a child in receipt of public assistance or child support services pursuant to [section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law](#) may request that the support collection unit review the order for a cost of living adjustment in accordance with the provisions of [section two hundred forty-c](#) of this article.

Credits

(Added L.1962, c. 313, § 10; amended L.1963, c. 685, § 9; L.1976, c. 133, § 1; L.1980, c. 281, § 12; L.1980, c. 530, § 11; L.1980, c. 645, § 4; L.1981, c. 416, § 24; L.1981, c. 695, § 3; L.1983, c. 347, § 3; L.1985, c. 809, § 7; L.1986, c. 849, § 1; L.1986, c. 892, § 6; [L.1988, c. 452, § 1](#); [L.1988, c. 457, § 9](#); [L.1989, c. 164, § 3](#); [L.1989, c. 567, §§ 6, 7](#); [L.1990, c. 818, §§ 6 to 9](#); [L.1992, c. 41, §§ 141, 145, 146](#); [L.1993, c. 59, §§ 3, 4, 10, 17, 23, 24](#); [L.1993, c. 354, § 1](#); [L.1994, c. 170, §§ 361 to 363](#); [L.1995, c. 81, §§ 237 to 239](#); [L.1995, c. 349, § 3](#); [L.1995, c. 389, § 1](#); [L.1995, c. 429, § 2](#); [L.1995, c. 538, § 2](#); [L.1995, c. 483, §§ 1, 2](#); [L.1996, c. 12, § 17](#); [L.1996, c. 85, § 2](#); [L.1997, c. 186, § 13, eff. July 8, 1997](#); [L.1997, c. 398, § 6, eff. Oct. 1, 1998](#); [L.1997, c. 398, §§ 94, 95, 102, 103, 142, eff. Jan. 1, 1998](#); [L.1998, c. 150, §§ 1, 2, eff. July 7, 1998](#); [L.1998, c. 214, § 57, eff. Nov. 4, 1998](#); [L.1998, c. 597, §§ 1, 2, eff. Dec. 22, 1998](#); [L.1999, c. 378, § 1, eff. July 27, 1999](#); [L.1999, c. 606, § 1](#); [L.2002, c. 624, § 4, eff. Oct. 2, 2002](#); [L.2003, c. 81, § 11, eff. June 18, 2003](#); [L.2007, c. 616, § 3, eff. Oct. 1, 2007](#); [L.2008, c. 532, § 6, eff. Dec. 3, 2008](#); [L.2008, c. 538, § 1, eff. Sept. 4, 2008](#).)