

Support Timeline

Q. Child and Spousal support payments:

How long does it normally take from the time of a court date to actually receiving payment through the Ontario Government's Family Responsibility Office (FRO)?

A. The FRO sends a notice to the employer upon the FRO receiving and registering the "support deduction order" (enforcing the support order.). The employer then has 14 days to start making deductions from the next pay period. Employers may remit based on their payroll cycles which may result in payments being received after the due date specified in the order. If the FRO doesn't know the payer's employer at the time of registration, a pre-authorized payment plan information package is sent to the payer. If the payer returns the form, funds will be taken directly from their bank account on the date they have specified. Trouble is, if there's a delay in returning the package and the lady who's supposed to be receiving the cash doesn't provide this



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or other information about income or asset sources, the FRO won't be able to enforce the Order. The FRO does not have an investigative, detective or "forensic accounting" branch that goes out of its way to find someone's source of income or assets. There's no government money for this type of investigative detective work. Write to your MPP. Until an employer begins deducting support payments or if payments by an employer are interrupted or terminated, it's the payer's direct responsibility to pay. Obviously, the FRO can't forward payments until they're received some information from somebody. Its not public assistance – it's merely a government run collection agency without little investigative teeth. It will only go after any money that the government might owe the payer, such as for outstand-

ing tax refunds. Or the FRO might stop the payer from driving or traveling outside of Canada by invalidating his driver's license or Passport for non-payment.

Some other reasons why recipients may not receive their support on time include: The employer deducted the payment but had not yet sent it to the FRO; the employer only has to deduct and remit support payments according to its payroll schedule, not your children's feeding schedule; payments sent to the wrong address; payments sent with the wrong case number or misspelled name; direct deposit info for recipient's bank is invalid; Welfare office takes payments due to the recipient; or money is owed to the FRO because earlier cheques went NSF ("bounced.") Once payment is received by the FRO it is supposed to be sent to the support recipient within 24-48 hours.