

Child support in Massachusetts is determined by formulas found in the Child Support Guidelines promulgated by the Chief Justice of the Trial Court pursuant to federal and state law

Guidelines are reviewed every 4 years by a Child Support Guidelines Task Force appointed by the Chief Justice of the Trial Court.

The most recent Task Force was assembled in 2024 with representatives of the court (judges, case managers, probation, legal staff), private bar, legal services, and economists.

The Guidelines revision was completed in 2025, effective as of December 1, 2025

There were not many changes but there were a few that are significant.

- Note: The 2021 revised Child Support Guidelines had a number of major changes, increasing child support percentages for families with more than 1 child, removing the arbitrary cap on consideration of child care costs and the inclusion of a rebuttable presumption of substantial hardship justifying a deviation where the overall child support order is more than 40% of the payor's income.

The maximum amount of combined income to which presumption orders apply was increased to \$450,000. When the combined income is over \$450,000, the additional amount may be considered in setting the award but at a lower percentage than that applied to the maximum level.

Income thresholds for the lowest groups of payors' income were adjusted, based on inflation, to \$301 and \$391 per week (100% and 130% of the federal poverty line) potentially increasing the number of recipients receiving the lowest presumptive child support orders of \$15 and \$33.

The amount of childcare costs actually paid factored into the child support calculations was increased to \$430 per week. It was clarified that summer camp costs, if for childcare purposes (as opposed to extracurricular or enrichment) are part of such costs.

Out-of-pocket medical expenses. The first \$250 is paid by the recipient; amounts over that are split, but instead of an equal split, they can be split based each party's percentage of the combined available income.

Other child related expenses. School expenses, sports, etc. can be split based each party's percentage of the combined available income.

The issue of consideration of alimony and child support, based on the recent Supreme Judicial Court case *Cavanaugh v. Cavanaugh*, will be addressed by separately.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/child-support-guidelines>