

## COOPERATION NOTICE INSTRUCTIONS

This sheet is to be given to applicant for personal records.

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### **Benefits of child support enforcement:**

Your cooperation in the child support enforcement process may be of value to you and your child because it might result in the following benefits:

1. Finding the absent parent;
2. Legally establishing your child's paternity;
3. Establishing the possibility that support payments might be higher than your assistance grant;
4. Establishing the possibility that you and your children may obtain rights to future social security, veterans, or other government benefits.

### **What is meant by cooperation?**

The law requires you to cooperate with the Local Office, Division of Family and Children and the Prosecuting Attorney's Office or Enforcement Agent to get any support owed to you and any of the children for whom you want TANF, unless you establish "good cause" for not cooperating as defined below. In cooperation with the Local Office, Division of Family and Children and the Prosecuting Attorney's Office or Enforcement Agent, you may be required to comply with certain requests which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Name the parent of any child applying for or receiving TANF, and information you have or that you can obtain to help find the parent;
2. If paternity has not been established for your child, you are required to name all possible fathers of your child and to help determine legally who the father is. Failure to name all possible fathers of a child for whom paternity has not been established may lead to the imposition of the sanction described below;
3. Give help to obtain money owed to you or to the children receiving TANF;
4. Notify your caseworker of any money which is given directly to you by the absent parent or the County Clerk (you may continue to get your assistance grant from the Local Office, Division of Family and Children) and pay this money to the State Child Support Bureau; and
5. You may be required to come to the Local Office, Division of Family and Children, child support office, or court to sign papers or give necessary information.

### **If you do not cooperate and you do not establish good cause, you will be subject to sanction as follows:**

1. You will be ineligible for assistance and your family's benefits will be reduced accordingly; and
2. Your children will still be eligible for TANF for their own needs, but your children's benefits will be paid to another person called a "Protective Payee."

### **What is meant by good cause?**

You may have good cause not to cooperate in the State's effort to collect child support. You may be excused from cooperating if you believe that cooperation would not be in the best interest of your child, and if you can provide evidence to support this claim.

How and when you may claim good cause:

1. If you want to claim good cause, you must tell a DFC worker that you think you have good cause. You can do this at any time you believe you have good cause not to cooperate.
2. If you want to claim good cause you must be given another notice. This second notice will explain the circumstances under which the Division of Family and Children may find good cause, and the type of evidence or other information which is needed to decide your claim. You may also ask for this second notice to help you decide whether or not to claim good cause.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THE FOLLOWING CHECKED ITEMS:

- ✓ A copy of the child(ren)'s birth certificate(s). Please obtain a copy of the birth certificate(s) from the **Health Department ONLY**. This will be at your own expense.
  
- ✓ Elkhart County Child Support Application.
  
- ✓ Paternity Questionnaire application.
  
- ✓ Notice and Waiver
  
- ✓ Child(ren)'s Medicaid Card
  
- ✓ A copy of the adoption/legal guardianship decree, **if applicable**
  
- ✓ A copy of the divorce decree/paternity documents, **if applicable**

\*\*\*\***Please note:** If court documents are requested and they are not located in Elkhart County, please provide our office with the name and address of the courthouse. Our office may be able to obtain them for you.