

# Recipient Responsibilities

## Maintenance Enforcement Program

### What can I do to help MEP?

- ▶ Keep MEP updated of all changes to your contact, address and banking information as soon as it changes.

*You have a legal obligation to update your information with MEP. If your information is not updated, MEP will not be able to inform you of important information on your case and forward payments to you.*

- ▶ Know your case number and PIN
- ▶ Refuse to accept payments directly from the Payor
- ▶ Make sure you are enrolled with MEP to receive payments by direct deposit
- ▶ Tell MEP if you know of any changes in the Payor's information including:
  - ▶ Contact Information
  - ▶ Employer
  - ▶ Financial information including banking information such as a Payor buying, selling, or mortgaging property
- ▶ If you have a compliment or complaint, tell MEP by following the steps on the *compliment and complaint page*
- ▶ Treat MEP staff with respect and in a polite manner
- ▶ Know that once you are enrolled with MEP the *Maintenance Enforcement Act* allows only MEP to decide how your Order will be enforced. No one else can enforce an Order when it is being enforced by MEP.

### What can I do if I am feeling unsafe?

- ▶ Call the police (911)
- ▶ Seek a *Court Order*  
*Emergency Protection Order*  
*Urgent Court Application*
- ▶ Refer to these services for help:  
*Family Violence – NS Family Law*  
*Advisory Council on the Status of Women*  
*Provincial Victim Services Program*  
*Transition House Association of Nova Scotia*
- ▶ Inform MEP of any safety concerns in the family. This will allow MEP to handle your case with special care.

### When should I contact MEP?

You should contact MEP as soon as you can in the following situations:

- ▶ If your information changes
- ▶ If you become aware of any changes to the payor's information
- ▶ If there is any change made to the Order by the court
- ▶ If there is a change in your or your child's situation that could affect your maintenance payments
- ▶ If the payor insists on making payments to you directly
- ▶ If you believe there is a mistake in MEP's payment records or you do not understand the records

### What do I do if I believe the Order no longer reflects my situation or my child's situation?

- ▶ Apply to court to change your Order

*MEP cannot make any changes to the terms of an Order. Only a court can change the terms of an Order.*

## How do I ask the Court to make changes to my Order?

- ▶ Contact the court nearest to you to ask about the court process
- ▶ If you and the payor agree on the changes to be made, tell the court officer about this
- ▶ You may be able to use services to help you make the changes without needing a court hearing
- ▶ Refer to these services:  
*Administrative Recalculation*  
*Court-based Assisted Dispute Resolution*

*If you are living in Nova Scotia, and the payor lives outside of Nova Scotia, please refer to Interjurisdictional Support Orders process.*

## Can I opt out of MEP before it gets started?

Yes, you may: however, both parties must agree to opt-out of MEP **within 10 days** of receiving notice in the mail from MEP that the Order has been filed.

## Can I ask MEP to stop monitoring or enforcing my Order?

You can make a request to have your Order withdrawn from enforcement by MEP:

- ▶ Contact MEP to discuss this option first
- ▶ Review instructions and complete a *Request for Withdrawal Form* and mail it to MEP

MEP may decline to enforce your Order under the *Maintenance Enforcement Act* for a number of reasons that include these examples:

- ▶ You are taking your own measures to enforce the Order outside of MEP (More information on this subject will be coming soon)
- ▶ You accept payments directly from the payor in relation to the Order
- ▶ You fail or refuse to provide necessary information that is needed to enforce the Order
- ▶ The amount of maintenance is not clear in the Order or the amount relies on a factor that is not in the Order
- ▶ There are terms in the Order that affect maintenance but the meaning is not clear

## How do I get answers to my questions?

- ▶ For general information or information about your Order, please see the *Contact Information* page for the ways to contact MEP.
- ▶ You may also need legal advice. Find out more at the NS Family Law website: *Getting Legal Advice*.

## Information sheet

- ▶ **Maintenance** means child or spousal support payments
- ▶ **Order** means Maintenance Order and includes registered **agreement**
- ▶ **Payor** means person ordered to pay support
- ▶ **Recipient** means person entitled to receive support