

## **Child Support—It's A Changing**

On September 15, 2009, the Indiana Supreme Court approved revisions to the Indiana Child Support Rules and Guidelines (“Guidelines”). Those approved revisions then became effective on January 1, 2010. One of the most significant changes that could impact you and your family involves the elimination of the child support plateau for high income earners.

The revised Guidelines still go about calculating child support in much the same way as the old system. Both parents still plug their gross weekly wages into the calculator to determine their combined weekly adjusted income so as to determine the basic child support obligation for their household given the number of children they share. Under the old Guidelines, if the parents combined weekly adjusted income was more than \$4,000 per week (\$208,000 per year) a complicated mathematical formula had to be used to determine the basic child support obligation. The basic child support obligation however reached a plateau as the parties combined gross weekly wages increased above \$4,000 per week.

Under the revised Guidelines, parents with combined weekly adjusted income up to \$10,000 per week (or \$520,000 per year) can now easily determine their basic child support obligation without using a complicated mathematical formula. For combined weekly adjusted incomes in excess of \$10,000 per week, the old mathematical formula has been replaced with a simpler linear calculation. For all combined weekly adjusted incomes above \$10,000 per week, the basic child support obligation will increase at a fixed percentage of the income above \$10,000 per week, depending upon the number of children (e.g. 7.1 percent for one child, 10 percent for two children, 11.5 percent for three children, 12.9 percent for four children, etc.). However, there is no longer a plateau in the basic child support obligation. Quite to the contrary, assuming everything else is constant; the basic child support obligation for someone earning \$20,000 per week will be roughly double the child support obligation of someone earning \$10,000 per week.

To demonstrate the significance of these changes please refer to the table below. This table presumes the Father is the sole income earner and the parties have one child.

Father's Gross Weekly Wages	Old Guidelines Child Support	New Guidelines Child Support
\$4,000	\$330 per week	\$330 per week
\$5,000	\$350 per week	\$413 per week
\$6,000	\$367 per week	\$457 per week
\$7,000	\$380 per week	\$500 per week

To learn more about the changes to the Guidelines and to run your own calculations please visit these websites: [http://www.in.gov/judiciary/rules/child\\_support/index.html](http://www.in.gov/judiciary/rules/child_support/index.html) and <https://mycourts.in.gov/supportcalculator/>.

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