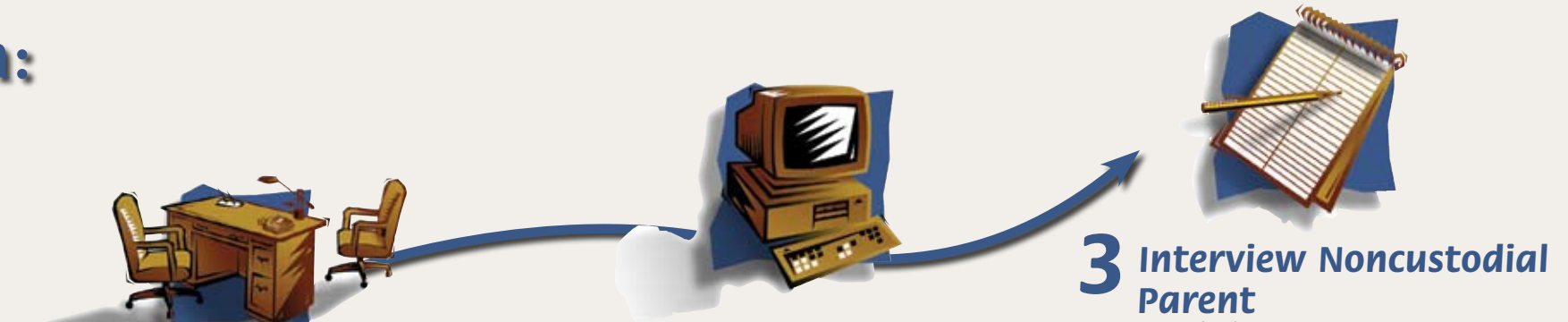


Child Support Enforcement Program: Providing for Florida's Children

Establishing Orders

Overseeing child support cases for over 900,000 children can be challenging. Before the first dime can be collected, an order for support must be in place. The 10 steps at right must be completed to establish a child support order through the courts. DOR must work with several partners to make the establishment process effective: custodial parents, noncustodial parents, attorneys, court clerks, sheriff's departments, and the judiciary. DOR is working with its partners to make the establishment process faster and more effective.



1 Interview Custodial Parent

During the interview, the Department of Revenue (DOR) collects information necessary to process the case. The interview usually takes a half hour.

2 Locate Noncustodial Parent

DOR uses a wide range of databases, lists and other sources of information to locate noncustodial parents.

3 Interview Noncustodial Parent

To make later steps easier, DOR attempts to make its initial contact with a noncustodial parent nonconfrontational.



8 Hearing Date Set

Procedures for setting hearing dates vary among Florida's 20 judicial circuits. Typically, cases are set for hearing in two months, but sometimes it takes longer.

7 Respond to Summons

By law, the noncustodial parent has 20 days to respond from the date of service.

6 Service of Process

The attorney or the clerk of court must prepare a legal request (summons) for service of process by the county sheriff or private process server. Service of process may take a month or more.

5 Legal Review of Referral & Filing with Court Clerk

Attorneys working under contract with DOR review the information provided, prepare the necessary court papers, and file the action with the clerk.

4 Prepare Packet for Attorney

DOR prepares documents providing information about the parents' finances and legal documentation on paternity.



10 Final Order Received

It takes up to two weeks for DOR to receive the final order, depending on the judge's practices and caseload.



9 Hearing Held

Judges and hearing officers generally conduct many hearings per day.

LEGEND

- Within DOR's control
- Outside DOR's control
- Required by law

FLORIDA For more information:
 **Department of Revenue**
myflorida.com/dor
800-622-5437