

# NPOWER!

Noncustodial Parent Outreach Work Referral



## Noncustodial Parent Program Guide

## **What Is *NPOWR!*?**

A program designed to assist noncustodial parents (NCPs) who are behind on child support payments by offering referral for employment placement assistance and job readiness services.

## **Who Is Eligible For Participation?**

Noncustodial parents who are unemployed and behind in their child support payments and are in OCSE's current case load. NCPs with open child support cases may be referred to the program by the Arkansas Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) or, in some cases, by the court system.

You may be eligible for the NPOWR program if:

- You are unemployed
- You have child support arrears
- You have not paid in 30 days
- There are no pending or existing OCSE legal actions on your case such as body attachments or pick up orders
- Your case has not been referred for criminal non-support

## **How Does The Program Work?**

- The program is voluntary unless you have been ordered by the court system to participate in the program. If you are interested in participating in the NPOWR program, you may contact us and asked us to review your case for program eligibility. OCSE will contact you to explain the status of your child support obligation and criteria for participation in the program.
- If your case meets the eligibility criteria, you will be scheduled to attend a program orientation session. The orientation will provide details of the program and the employment assistance services that the Arkansas Workforce Centers will provide to you.
- The Workforce Center will provide job search support such as employment leads, skills assessment, help with resume' writing, and other related job search activities.
- As a program participant, you will be required to make a minimum of three valid job contacts per week.
- You will be required to provide proof of job search activities to OCSE every 30 days.
- Maximum program participation is 90 days.

## **What Happens If I Can't Find A Job?**

If you have not found a job after 90 days of participating in the program OCSE will review your case and contact you to discuss the options that are available to you.

## **What Happens If I Don't Follow The Program?**

To participate in the program, you must follow the program's guidelines. If you do not, your participation in the program will be terminated and any and all court sanctions or enforcement actions will immediately apply.

You may be dropped from the program for any of the following reasons. If you:

- Do not report to the Workforce Center as required by the program's guidelines
- Miss scheduled appointments with employers, OCSE, Workforce Center counselors, or the court
- Fail to comply with the employment plan established by the Workforce Center counselor
- Fail to report employment status
- Fail to provide proof of job search
- Are unwilling to continue participation in the program

*Any display of disruptive, threatening, or non-cooperative behavior at any time towards any staff member of agencies administering the program will result in immediate termination from the program and any court sanctions or enforcement actions will immediately apply.*

## **What are the Advantages of Participating in the Program?**

While you are participating in this program, OCSE will not take action to suspend your driver's license and automobile license plates, or any professional licenses you may hold. If your licenses have already been suspended, we will initiate action to release them. Additionally, OCSE will not file legal action against you. However, if you were ordered into the program by the court system, the program's guidelines cannot supersede the judge's orders.

Other enforcement remedies, such as interception of your state and federal tax refund, passport denial, and credit bureau reporting, are required by federal law to continue. Additionally, state law requires that OCSE refer cases meeting certain criteria to the appropriate prosecuting attorney for possible prosecution for failure to support a child.

## **Will I Have To Make Child Support Payments While I Am Participating In The Program?**

Your child support obligation will still be in force and continue to accrue while you participate in the *NPOWR!* Program. However, as explained in the previous section, OCSE will suspend certain administrative and civil actions against you during your participation in the program.



## Contact Us

For more information on the program or to find out if your case may be eligible for the program, you may:

- Call the *NPOWR!* Program Information line at (501) 371-5020. You will be asked to leave your name and telephone number. We will contact you regarding the program.
- Fill in the online *NPOWR!* Inquiry form at [www.childsupport.arkansas.gov](http://www.childsupport.arkansas.gov) which can be accessed by selecting the Noncustodial Parent link, and then selecting the *NPOWR!* link.

The Arkansas Office of Child Support Enforcement administers the *NPOWR!* Program in partnership with the Arkansas Workforce Centers, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, and Arkansas Workforce Investment Boards. Case management decisions are made by the Arkansas Office of Child Support Enforcement. Any questions regarding your case should be directed to your OCSE caseworker.

