

First determine the change in circumstances.

How's Your Support

by *Deanie Kramer*

Not receiving enough child support? Paying too much child or spousal support? What you 'can do' to change this!

People often receive an order to pay or receive child and/or spousal support at the time of their divorce. They send or receive the same amount each month. Then circumstances arise that necessitate a change in the amount paid or received.

First, determine the change in circumstances. This change may warrant an increase or decrease in the amount being paid or received. Ask yourself:

Are you earning more or less than you were at the time of the original order?

Are there extensive medical bills to pay?

Have you suddenly lost your job?

Do you or your children have urgent expenses that were not determined at the time of the order?

Has the custody and visitation schedule changed?

Do you now have other dependents?

A "yes" to any one of these questions, may mean you have a change of circumstance warranting a modification of your original Support Order.

Gather information. You will need a copy of the original Court Order for support, your three most recent pay stubs and copies of the past several income tax returns. Try to determine the "other sides'" current income, and head for professional help.

Explore the legal program called Dissomaster, used by the Courts in California, to calculate the guidelines for child and spousal support. An attorney, paralegal or accountant familiar with the program, can use information from your case to find the current support guidelines and compare them with the current

order. This information will help determine if it is appropriate and cost effective to pursue a change or modification to the current amount of support.

Obtaining a modification to the Support Order: Court documents are required for the final stage of appearing in Court. The Judge will need a prepared and filed Order to Show Cause for Modification of Support, along with a current Income and Expense Declaration, plus a written statement (Declaration) that describes the change in circumstances, including relief you are seeking from the Courts.


Your options: Act as your own attorney. Or, even better, hire an experienced and knowledgeable professional, a Family Law attorney or a

paralegal to prepare the required documents and represent you in Court.

Now you know what you 'can do' to receive a modification to your Support Order. Good Luck!

Deanie Kramer, Certified Paralegal and Mediator, is the President of Los Angeles based Divorce Resource. Her full service organization specializes in assisting individuals and families in most family law matters, resolving disputes, and helping guide them through the legal maze of the court system. (310) 441-7555.





Making Lemonade – The Single Parent Network

is a whimsical and highly informative community for single parents of all kinds.

Created by Jody Seidler, a single mother with a sense of humor and a sense of purpose, this online community has become the leading portal for single parents on the Internet.

Jody, single mom to ten year old Sam, didn't find much when she searched for community support for single parents online, so she created her own web page. "A Day in the Life of a Single Mother" was so successful, it further evolved into Making Lemonade, a sophisticated site that offers links to single parenting resources, bulletin boards, poetry, stories, email chatting groups, and a bi-monthly newsletter.

Making Lemonade – The Single Parent Network (www.makinglemonade.com) offers both male and female single parents a place to find support, information, creativity and a good chuckle. The site tag line is "Remember, you're not alone, and that is what the site offers – a feeling of community, and a sense of nurturing and safety. Making Lemonade offers much more ...

When Life Hands You Lemons ... [Makinglemonade.com!](http://www.makinglemonade.com)