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CITY PROGRAM GIVES PARENTS A LIMITED-TIME OPPORTUNITY TO REDUCE CHILD SUPPORT DEBT

Pay It Off Program to Offer as Much as Three Times the Credit in Debt Reduction to Encourage More Parents to Pay Child Support Consistently

NEW YORK—The New York City Human Resources Administration today announced that the Pay It Off program, which gives parents \$2 in credit for every \$1 dollar they pay toward child support debt permanently owed to New York City, will now offer an additional incentive to consistent child support payers that could allow parents to get \$3 in credit for every \$1 dollar paid. Child support is owed to the City during periods when it goes unpaid and the noncustodial parent’s children are receiving cash assistance.

“Every year Child Support keeps tens of thousands of New York City children out of poverty,” said **Department of Social Services Commissioner Steven Banks**. “Doing our part to help noncustodial parents clear away debt lets them focus on what’s important: giving their children the financial and emotional support they need right now.”

To qualify for Pay It Off in general, parents need to make a minimum payment of \$500 during October 2018. To be eligible for the additional match of up to 100 percent of their payment, noncustodial parents need to have paid their child support consistently for the previous six months.

Like last year, Pay It Off will also offer parents who qualify the opportunity to receive an immediate additional reduction of 10% of their payment amount by signing up for HRA’s [Arrears Credit Program](#).

As a result, parents who qualify for all three benefits could see a \$500 payment against their City child support debt more than triple to a total of \$1,550. That breaks down into the original \$500 payment, plus the \$500 Pay It Off match, the \$500 bonus match for last six months’ payments, and a \$50 sign-up bonus for joining the Arrears Credit Program.

“Research shows that paying child support consistently benefits children tremendously,” said **HRA Administrator Grace Bonilla**. “By adding important new incentives to Pay It Off we are furthering our efforts to provide New Yorkers with two-generation economic support.”

“Promoting the value of regular child support payments and working to ensure that child support orders reflect the parent’s actual earning ability are valuable goals and we support the work New York City is doing to achieve those,” said **New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Commissioner Samuel D. Roberts**. “Pay It Off can speed noncustodial parents’ efforts to lower their debts while also reinforcing the reliable and sustainable payments to support children.”

The 2018 version of Pay It Off builds on the earlier success of the initiative in 2013, 2014, 2016, and 2017, when HRA’s Office of Child Support Services (OCSS) collected a combined total of about \$3.7 million and reduced the debt owed by parents who pay child support by nearly \$9.7 million. As a result of the 2017 program, about a quarter of the program’s participants eliminated all the child support debt they owed the City government and about half of the participants signed up for the Arrears Credit Program. Parents were notified about the program in mid-September.

Child support debt can accumulate when not paid consistently or in full which may happen when the debt exceeds a noncustodial parent’s ability to pay. When this happens with noncustodial parents whose children receive cash assistance, the debt is owed to the government to reimburse it for the cash benefits the family received.

To participate in Pay It Off, parents with child support debt permanently owed to New York City should first call **929-252-5200** for details and to determine their eligibility. Between October 1 and October 31 parents can then visit the OCSS Customer Service Walk-In Center to make their minimum payment of \$500 and sign the necessary agreements. This year parents can also participate by mail, provided they first call **929-252-5200** to verify their eligibility. Participants will also have their cases reviewed by child support caseworkers who can potentially connect them to employment services, mediation services, and OCSE’s other debt-reduction programs. Additional information about the Pay It Off program is also available in [English/Spanish](#), [Arabic](#), [Bengali](#), Chinese ([Traditional](#) and [Simplified](#)), [French](#), [Haitian Creole](#), [Korean](#), [Polish](#), [Russian](#), and [Urdu](#).

The OCSS [Customer Service Walk-In Center](#) is located at 151 West Broadway in Lower Manhattan. Payments can be made by money order, certified or personal checks, credit card, and debit card (provided the debit card carries a Visa or MasterCard logo).

To learn more about the child support program, visit www.nyc.gov/hra/ocss.

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