



# FACT SHEET

## Sweeping Reforms HIT the Child Support Agency

The Child Support Agency was set up in 1993 to ensure parents who do not live with their children continue to pay for their upkeep. It was announced on 24 June 2006 that the Child Support Agency is to be re-designed. In spite of recent reforms which started in 2003 and with the publication of the Operational Improvement Plan earlier on this year, the Agency has failed to produce value for money for taxpayers.

The National Audit Office revealed that the CSA spends 70p collecting every £1 of child maintenance from absent parents and reports that, in total, the agency has failed to collect £3.5bn in payments since it began and even more shockingly, 60% of the money is now probably unrecoverable.

The simpler system of child support is intended to enable and encourage parents to make their own maintenance arrangements with firm and effective intervention where that is not possible. A new organisation will be established to deliver child support for the future.

Tougher enforcement measures will be acted upon where parents do not meet their financial obligations to their children - i.e. the possibility of imposing curfews and removal of passports of repeated non-payers.

The CSA will have to carefully manage the transition from the Child Support Agency to the new organisation.

The change cannot happen overnight and it is expected that the Department of Work and Pensions will be consulting on the proposals and publish a White Paper in the autumn.

The CSA have pledged that nothing will be allowed to disrupt the maintenance that already supports half a million children.

Now it is your chance to have your say. What is your experience of the CSA? Have you benefited from the system? Have you been displeased with service levels. If you would like to comment please email your thoughts and experiences to : GillHarper@pellys.co.uk  
Comments may be published on the Pellys LLP website.

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