

**MFIP:**

Caregivers with children must help pursue child and spousal support and child care support (if they receive child care assistance), unless they have good cause for not cooperating. See [0012.21.03 \(Support From Non-Custodial Parents\)](#). Caregivers may claim good cause at any time by completing the [Cooperation With Child Support Enforcement \(DHS-2338\) \(PDF\)](#). Good cause is automatically approved upon completion of the (DHS-2338) if a caregiver is a current participant in the Safe at Home (SAH) program. See [0029.29 \(Safe At Home Program\)](#).

Caregivers with children who do not cooperate with the child support office are subject to sanction. See [0012.24 \(Child Support Sanctions\)](#). Caregivers who are subject to sanction and then claim good cause are eligible while their good cause claim is pending. Do not impose a sanction unless a claim is denied.

**INFORMING ABOUT GOOD CAUSE**

Use the [Cooperation With Child Support Enforcement \(DHS-2338\) \(PDF\)](#) to tell clients of their right to claim good cause and the procedure for determining if good cause exists. This notice is required at the time of initial application and any time caregivers add children. Recipients of assistance can claim good cause at any time during the receipt of assistance. Put a copy of the signed notice in the case file.

Good cause exists when:

- The caregiver is a current participant in the Safe at Home Program.
- The mother conceived the child as a result of rape or incest.
- Legal proceedings for the adoption of the child are pending.
- The parent is trying to decide whether to keep or give the child up for adoption. The parent must be working with a public or licensed private social service agency and the decision process cannot exceed 3 months.
- Cooperation will cause physical or emotional harm to the child.
- Cooperation will cause physical or emotional harm to the child's caregiver, which will reduce the caregiver's ability to adequately care for the child.

Physical and emotional harm must be of a serious nature in order to justify a finding of good cause exemption. A finding of good cause exemption based on emotional harm may only be based upon a demonstration of emotional impairment that substantially affects the person's ability to function.

A good cause review is required when an MFIP caregiver has been sanctioned at 30% for 6 months. See [0012.24 \(Child Support Sanctions\)](#).

When a client files a good cause claim, send a copy of the [Cooperation With Child Support Enforcement \(DHS-2338\) \(PDF\)](#) to the child support agency.

**GOOD CAUSE COMMITTEE**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) requires county agencies to form a county good cause committee with at least 1 representative from the child support enforcement agency. DHS also encourages county agencies to add representatives from the Child Care Assistance program and the Health Care programs, to ensure that each area is represented.

The good cause committee uses 7 notices to give all caregivers claiming good cause consistent information about the committee's decision and about their rights and responsibilities. These notices are:

- [Important Information about Your Request for a Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3627\) \(PDF\)](#).

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- [Notice of Denial of Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3628\) \(PDF\)](#).
  - [Notice of Child Support Good Cause Approval \(DHS-3629\) \(PDF\)](#).
  - [Notice of Child Support Good Cause Redetermination \(DHS-3630\) \(PDF\)](#).
  - [Request to End Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3631\) \(PDF\)](#).
  - [Request for Additional Information to Prove Your Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3632\) \(PDF\)](#).
  - [Notice of Approval of Redetermination of Your Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3633\) \(PDF\)](#).

The only change that counties are allowed to make to the above notice text is the letterhead and salutation. In some counties, the assistance program case worker may send these documents instead of the good cause committee.

The good cause committee should make decisions within 45 days. Caregivers are given various time frames to respond based on the information requested. Generally, if they have not responded in the time frame given, the good cause committee must deny the good cause claim. If the caregiver requests additional time to submit evidence, the good cause committee should grant the extra time if it appears that the caregiver is cooperating and is trying to obtain the information. Good cause committees must assist caregivers in gathering evidence and pay necessary costs, if requested.

## WHEN GOOD CAUSE IS CLAIMED

If an applicant claims good cause, the good cause committee will contact the caregiver by sending the [Important Information about Your Request for a Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3627\) \(PDF\)](#) and the [Notice of Privacy Practices \(DHS-3979\) \(PDF\)](#). The [Important Information about Your Request for a Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3627\) \(PDF\)](#) tells the caregiver about the good cause claim process, what kind of evidence is acceptable to prove the claim, and what will happen next. The good cause committee must mail this letter within 5 working days of the good cause committee's receipt of the claim. The good cause committee will send one letter per good cause claim, or per non-custodial parent (NCP).

In some instances when a caregiver has more than one child in common with the NCP, the caregiver may want to claim a good cause exemption for only one child. Complete a separate STAT/ABPS panel for the child named on the good cause claim. The child support office will open a separate case for the child with the good cause claim.

The caregiver is asked to provide proof of good cause within 20 days of receipt of the [Important Information about Your Request for a Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3627\) \(PDF\)](#). See [0010 \(Verification\)](#), [0010.18.33 \(Verifying Family Violence\)](#). Inform the good cause committee if information has already been provided to substantiate a claim of family violence. If the caregiver is a current participant in the Safe at Home program and has the SAH identification card no further proof is required. See [0029.29 \(Safe At Home Program\)](#).

One type of evidence listed on the [Important Information about Your Request for a Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3627\) \(PDF\)](#) that the caregiver can submit is a sworn statement from someone other than the person claiming good cause who can attest to the caregiver's claim. The statement must be notarized. The good cause committee may receive statements that are not notarized. Because state statute does not limit the evidence which can be considered, the good cause committee should use its discretion to determine how to use the statement in combination with other evidence. A caregiver may also submit a statement as evidence, but the caregiver's statement does not have to be notarized.

## GOOD CAUSE CLAIM ON AN OPEN PROGRAM STOPS ALL ACTION ON NCP CASE

The child support agency will not begin activity to pursue support or establish paternity while a good cause claim is pending or when there is an approved good cause claim in place under any open program. When a child support case is already open and active, the child support agency will stop all enforcement actions on the case, including income withholding. A good cause approval or pending request affects the entire child support case for that NCP (child support, child care support, and medical support portions of the order), regardless of what assistance is received by the caregiver.

## WHEN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS NEEDED TO PROVE GOOD CAUSE CLAIM

The good cause committee may need more evidence to make a decision on a good cause claim. The good cause committee will send the [Request for Additional Information to Prove Your Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3632\) \(PDF\)](#) to the caregiver, which gives examples of the kinds of additional evidence the caregiver needs to provide. The [Notice of Privacy Practices \(DHS-3979\) \(PDF\)](#) must be sent with the [Request for Additional Information to Prove Your Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3632\) \(PDF\)](#). The good cause committee will allow the caregiver an additional 20 days to send in the information. If there is a specific piece or type of evidence the good cause committee wants the caregiver to provide, it is entered on the "Other" line under the heading of "What You Must Provide".

The good cause committee evaluates the claim based on the evidence provided.

Some caregivers may not have additional evidence. For example, if the caregiver has not had contact with the NCP because of a restraining order, there may not be any contact to report. In these situations a written statement from the caregiver or a notarized statement from someone else is acceptable evidence to help prove that a good cause exemption is appropriate.

## GOOD CAUSE CLAIM IS APPROVED

The good cause committee will send the caregiver the [Notice of Child Support Good Cause Approval \(DHS-3629\) \(PDF\)](#) when they determine the caregiver is exempt from the requirement to cooperate with the child support agency. The [Notice of Child Support Good Cause Approval \(DHS-3629\) \(PDF\)](#) tells the caregiver that the good cause committee has approved the request for good cause exemption, what will happen to the child support case for the child, and that the approval is good for only 1 year.

If good cause is approved, the child support agency must review the child support case for closure during the approval period.

When the factors that led to the original exemption continue to exist, a good cause exemption must be allowed without additional evidence under succeeding applications and redeterminations during the approval period.

In some situations granting a permanent good cause exemption is appropriate. Limit granting a permanent good cause exemption to situations that usually will not change and for which additional evidence is not necessary or possible.

For example, if a good cause exemption were initially granted because the child was conceived as a result of rape or incest, granting a permanent good cause exemption would be appropriate. The good cause committee still must schedule the case for annual review, but it will not send the [Notice of Child Support Good Cause Redetermination \(DHS-3630\) \(PDF\)](#). Instead, the good cause committee will send the [Notice of Approval of Redetermination of Your Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3633\) \(PDF\)](#). This notice reminds the caregiver that good cause is approved for 1 year, and gives information on how to end the good cause exemption if the caregiver now wants child support enforcement services.

## GOOD CAUSE CLAIM IS DENIED

The good cause committee will send the [Notice of Denial of Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3628\) \(PDF\)](#) to the caregiver when they decide to deny the good cause claim. A good cause claim can be denied at the time of the original request for it or at the time of annual recertification. The denial notice tells the caregiver that the claim is denied and why. It also lists the caregiver's options now that the claim is denied. The options are to:

- Request a conference with the good cause committee to resolve the issues that led to the denial of the good cause claim. The caregiver must make a request for a conference within 30 days of receiving the notice of denial of child support good cause exemption. The good cause committee schedules this conference and can hold it in person or by phone. The conference may lead the good cause committee to review the materials again and to make a different decision on the claim.
- Appeal the good cause decision. The [Appeal to State Agency \(DHS-0033\) \(PDF\)](#) provides instructions on how to file an appeal of the decision and provides information on how to continue receiving benefits during the appeal period.

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- Cooperate with pursuing child support and child care support.
  - Incur a sanction for non-cooperation. See [0012.24 \(Child Support Sanctions\)](#).
  - Withdraw the application.

## REVIEW OF APPROVED GOOD CAUSE CLAIMS

The good cause committee must review good cause approvals annually to determine whether the reasons for originally granting good cause exemptions still exist. The good cause committee will send the [Notice of Child Support Good Cause Redetermination \(DHS-3630\) \(PDF\)](#) and the [Notice of Privacy Practices \(DHS-3979\) \(PDF\)](#) to the caregiver at least 30 days before the 1 year redetermination date. The [Notice of Child Support Good Cause Redetermination \(DHS-3630\) \(PDF\)](#) tells the caregiver that it is time to review the good cause exemption, that additional or new evidence is needed, and what to do if the caregiver does not have additional or new evidence. The good cause committee should include the [Request to End Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3631\) \(PDF\)](#) with the [Notice of Child Support Good Cause Redetermination \(DHS-3630\) \(PDF\)](#).

If a caregiver with a good cause exemption moves to another county within the year, the review date for the good cause exemption remains 1 year from the date the exemption was approved. The documentation and evidence supporting a good cause claim submitted to a good cause committee may be shared with another good cause committee for the purpose of determining or redetermining good cause.

The good cause committee may review an approval before the 1 year good cause exemption is up if there is reason to believe that the facts that led to the exemption have changed.

The good cause redetermination date might not be the same as the MFIP redetermination date.

The good cause committee will send the [Notice of Approval of Redetermination of Your Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3633\) \(PDF\)](#) when it has approved the good cause exemption for another year. This notice gives the caregiver the date the good cause committee will review the exemption again and tells the caregiver what needs to be done if the caregiver no longer wants to claim a good cause exemption.

## CAREGIVER REQUESTS TO END GOOD CAUSE EXEMPTION

A caregiver may withdraw a claim for good cause at any time during the process or at any time during the approval period, including at the time of the good cause redetermination. Caregivers should request a withdrawal in writing by completing the [Request to End Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3631\) \(PDF\)](#) and returning it to the good cause committee or their MFIP worker. When the good cause committee receives the [Request to End Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3631\) \(PDF\)](#) they should forward it to the MFIP worker and the child support office. When the MFIP worker receives the form they must:

- Notify the child support office through the MAXIS interface by changing the good cause code on the STAT/ABPS panel. They may also forward a copy of the notice to the county child support office.  
AND
- Notify the good cause committee that approved the good cause claim.

After receiving the [Request to End Child Support Good Cause Exemption \(DHS-3631\) \(PDF\)](#), the child support office must enforce an existing support obligation or establish a support obligation as if a good cause exemption never existed.

### DWP:

Follow MFIP. However, the sanction for noncooperation is to close the case. There are no vendoring provisions in DWP. If the caregiver cooperates, reopen DWP.

**SNAP, MSA, GA, GRH:**  
No provisions.

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