

# UNDERSTANDING CHILD MAINTENANCE

**A Resource for Litigants In Person**

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**All parents have a duty to maintain their children regardless of their marital or union status. Parents or guardians who have custody, care, and control of their children can apply for child maintenance.**

**Swipe through to learn more about what child maintenance is and how to apply.**



This information has been brought to you through a joint project of the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago, the United States Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, and the National Center for State Courts.

# What is child maintenance?

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**Child maintenance** is the payment of money to assist with the costs of raising a child or children.



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# What does child maintenance cover?

Child maintenance can cover day-to-day living expenses and costs related to the general upkeep of the child or children.

These can include:

- Schoolbooks
- Uniforms
- Food
- Medical and dental expenses



# Who can apply for child maintenance?

A parent, guardian, or person who has legal custody for a child can apply for child maintenance.



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## Steps for Applying for Child Maintenance

# STEP 1:

## CONTACT THE COURT

Call the **Judiciary's Customer Contact Centre** at **224-5182**, **62-TTLAW (628-8529)**, or **23-LAWTT (235-2988)** or send an email to the **Family Court** nearest you.

A court representative will contact you to help you complete the child maintenance application.



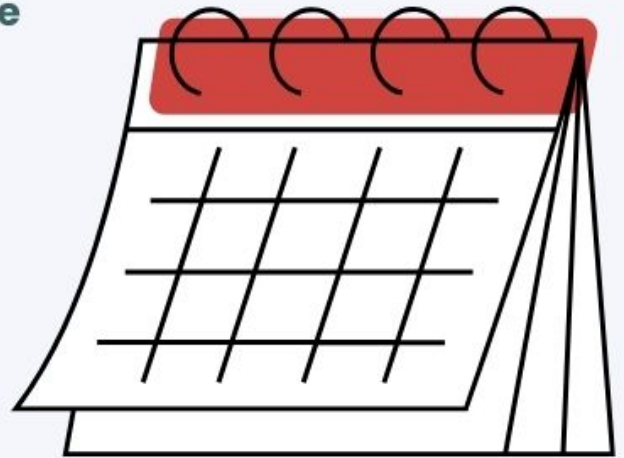
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# STEP 2:

## GET A HEARING DATE

Once the application is filed at the Court, the Court will schedule the matter for a hearing. It will also notify you of the date and time of your court hearing.



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# STEP 3:

## NOTIFY THE OTHER PARTY

A Police Officer will serve a **Summons and Notice** to the other party (usually the other parent). This tells them about the case and the court hearing.



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# STEP 4:

## ATTEND YOUR COURT HEARING

At the court hearing, a Judge, Master, or Magistrate will review your application and make a decision.



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**For more information on applying for child maintenance, contact the Family Court nearest you.**



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